

# THE SÁNCHEZ CERRO REGIMES IN PERU, 1930-1933

By  
ORAZIO A. CICCARELLI

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## PREFACE

The history of the Sánchez Cerro regimes has been obscured by the overwhelming attention given the Apra party, whose early history coincides with Sánchez Cerro's political rise. He has been uncritically used as an example of the "reactionary military-civilian clique" which has prevented Apra from exercising its role as the only "real representative of the people." Sánchez Cerro's role in Peruvian politics, however, was more interesting and complicated than the one ascribed to him by the Apristas and their sympathizers. In fact, Sánchez Cerro created the first movement which competed directly with Apra for the loyalty of the Peruvian masses and was the first to thwart Aprista pretensions to power.

The first important confrontation between Sánchez Cerro and Apra took place in the 1931 presidential election in which the "hero of Arequipa" overwheld his opponent, Haya de la Torre. Of course, the Apristas disclaimed the validity of the results by charging fraud, and their claims went generally unchallenged. They never proved the dishonesty of the election; however, its honesty remained equally unsubstantiated.

The author's interest in the election was aroused originally by the discovery that Sánchez Cerro was not in a position to manipulate the outcome since the junta then in power harbored strong antipathies against him. This interest grew into a desire to analyze the election

and the ensuing Aprista-Sánchez Cerrista confrontations, which in turn became the subject of this dissertation.

Although the resource material available is not abundant, it is sufficient to derive certain conclusions about the 1931 election and the Sánchez Cerro regimes of which the first is that the election was one of the most honest ever held in Peru. It became necessary to assure oneself of this fact because, in a sense, the credibility of the Apra party was at stake. Second, it appears that Sánchez Cerro captured the votes of two of the most important elements of Peruvian society upon which Apra sought to base its power--the urban voter and the Indians. This conclusion, however, is tentative and needs more definite verification since important provincial returns were not available to the author. Third, the election, aside from representing the struggle between two young popular caudillos, also reflected the continuation of the struggle between Civilistas and Leguistas which dated back to the early years of the twentieth century. Fourth, the election and the ensuing Sánchez Cerrista-Aprista confrontation had overtones of the world-wide struggle for ideological supremacy waged by fascism, communism, and democracy--even though the forces in Peru did not correspond exactly to those engaged in political conflict in Europe. Finally, Sánchez Cerro, as a nationalist, recognized the importance of more government involvement in the economic, social, and educational needs of Peru.

The work is divided into three parts. The first deals with Peru's political history from the creation of the Civilista party in 1871 to the fall of Leguía in 1930 (Chapter I), and with Sánchez Cerro's first regime, August, 1930-March, 1931 (Chapter II). It should be made



clear in connection with Chapter I that technically Leguía was not a Civilista after 1911. However, his political past and his rise to power were so closely connected with that party that his regime (1919-1930) is considered part of the Civilista period of predominance (1899-1930). In addition, the Civilista label attached to Leguía represents the view of the contemporary press which considered him no more than an unorthodox member of the Civilista party. Part II contains a description of the Samanez Ocerpo junta, a discussion of the presidential candidates---their parties and platforms---and an analysis of the 1931 election. Part III deals with the second Sánchez Cerro regime (December, 1931-April, 1933) emphasizing its handling of political and international crises, but also includes a review of the regime's economic, social, and educational policies.

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PART I

THE FIRST SÁNCHEZ CERRO REGIME

## CHAPTER I

### POLITICAL ANTECEDENTS, 1871-1930

The main purpose of this chapter is to lay the basis for an understanding of certain historical aspects of the Sánchez Cerro regime. The story begins in 1871, the year in which the Civilista party was founded. The emphasis, however, is placed on the 1895-1930 period in which the party became the most important element in Peruvian politics. The internal struggles and divisions experienced by the Civilistas during those years were to have important repercussions in the Sánchez Cerro era.

#### The Civilista party

The political leadership of Peru for most of the 19th century was in the hands of military men. At a time of political and economic instability, some civilians had been content to abdicate power to the army since it was the best equipped and organized institution in the nation. In 1871, however, a group of civilians created the Civilista party, and in the presidential elections of the following year were led to victory by Manuel Pardo. The party membership consisted of capitalist aristocrats who resented the government's policy of granting economic privileges to foreigners, and of other concerned individuals who sought: to moralize government; to end the irresponsible economic euphoria of the guano age; to diminish military participation in politics;

and to make the nation's finances dependent on a more widely based system of national taxation. At the time, in fact, the policy had been to rely almost totally on the revenues from guano and other natural resources.<sup>1</sup>

The Civilista party's strength remained substantial as long as Pardo remained its leader. When he was assassinated in 1878, and when, the following year, the eruption of the War of the Pacific found Peru militarily unprepared, due partially to the Pardo regime's lack of foresight, the party underwent a drastic decline. Its members, however, never relinquished power completely. They participated in the governments of García Calderón and Ignacio Iglesias during the War of the Pacific and in 1886 contributed to the election of Andrés Cáceres (1886-1890), the head of the militarist Constitutionalist party, and one of the few living heroes of the war.

The alliance between the Civilistas and the Constitutionalistas continued intermittently until 1894. On April 1 of that year president Remigio Morales Bermudez, the man Cáceres had handpicked to succeed him, died. A struggle for power developed among the Constitutionalist, the Civilista, and the Democratic party, the latter founded by Nicolás de Piérola in 1889. With the aid of the army Cáceres was elected. Certain of the outcome, the major parties had boycotted the

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<sup>1</sup>The information and interpretations in most of the chapter are derived mainly from the following sources: Jorge Basadre, Historia de la república del Perú (5th ed.; Lima: Ediciones Historia, 1964), VII-X; Víctor Andrés Belaunde, La crisis presente, 1914-1939 (Lima: Ediciones Mercurio Peruano, 1940); Carlos Miro Quesada Laos, Autopsia de los partidos políticos (Lima: Ediciones Páginas Peruanas, 1961).

election, and the Democrats had retired to the provinces to prepare for an uprising. With their ranks inflated daily by newly won supporters, the rebels invaded Lima in early 1895. After several days of fighting, in which two thousand died, Cáceres resigned and left Peru.

The revolt of 1895 put an end to the political supremacy enjoyed by the military since 1886. It also prepared the way for the election of Piérola (1895-1899), and for one of the most progressive periods in the history of Peru.

Piérola had been in public life since 1869. In 1895 his popularity was at its highest, allowing him to make whatever he wanted of the circumstances. Age had matured him, and the impetuosity of the 1870's had given way to the statesmanship of the 1890's. He, therefore, called upon the Civilistas to form a coalition with his party and work toward the revitalization of the country's economy, and the creation of stable institutions to provide for the orderly development of the nation. The Civilistas, reorganized and reanimated by its new leader Manuel Candamo, accepted Piérola's offer and thus contributed in giving Peru a period of progressive rule.

Civilista cooperation with the Democrats, however, was short-lived. The alliance had been unnatural from the beginning. Though there were no major ideological differences and their leaders came from analogous economic and social backgrounds, personal animosities had marked the relationship between the leaders of the two parties for some time. Bad feelings had existed since the 1860's when Pardo had attacked Piérola, then Minister of Hacienda under Balta, for his economic policy of complete dependence on guano, for sponsoring huge and costly public works, and for signing the Dreyfus contract which had given a

French company a monopoly on the exportation of guano in exchange for several million soles and repayment of Peru's foreign debt. Piérola had retaliated with vehemence during Pardo's regime with an intensive anti-government campaign and with attempts to undermine the regime by force. When in 1878 Pardo was assassinated, Piérola was blamed, and for a while his wife was also suspected and imprisoned. During the War of the Pacific the two groups continued their exchange of recriminations, and up to 1895 the Democrats criticized members of the Civilista party for participating in the post-war military regimes.

The event which officially terminated the 1895 coalition was the failure of one party to support the other in a minor local election. When the break came it was shown that the Civilistas had extended their power at the expense of the Democrats and had come to control the electoral machinery so thoroughly that later even Piérola could be denied the mayoralty of Lima. They finally monopolized power and in the process caused a division between what Jorge Basadre calls "el país real y el país legal,"<sup>2</sup> or between the people and its supposed representatives. The Democratic, Liberal, and other political parties, denied the opportunity to reach the presidency, declined -- to reappear in force only during times of serious divisions within the Civilista party. It was, in fact, such a division which in 1912 allowed the populist Guillermo Billinghurst, a long-time Democrat and much admired mayor of Lima, to be swept into the presidential palace on a wave of popular support. His constituency contained the urban middle and lower classes, and he rewarded them with social legislation and short-lived electoral

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<sup>2</sup>Jorge Basadre, Historia de la república del Perú, II (3rd ed.; Lima: Editorial Cultura Antártica, 1946), 303.

reforms. But when he attempted to dissolve Congress and call for new elections, he was overthrown.

Except for this brief challenge, the Civilistas managed to retain control of Peru's political processes until 1930. The country still experienced political strife, but it came mainly from within the Civilista party itself.

The Civilistas were a socially and economically elite group representing landowners, bankers, merchants, newspapermen, financiers, lawyers, Supreme Court justices, rectors of San Marcos, etc.<sup>3</sup> Their power base was principally in the cities and ports of Peru. In fact, Manuel Pardo, the founder; Manuel Candamo, the consolidator; and Augusto Leguía, the liquidator of the party, were all merchants.<sup>4</sup> Though they lacked the popular support enjoyed by the Democrats, they made up for this through their considerable social prestige and their economic and political effectiveness. With the further help of a restrictive electoral system, they were able to monopolize power.

To view the party as a monolith however, intent merely upon the exploitation of the country, would be an oversimplification. Ideological and generation differences existed, and they led to the establishment of various independent branches within the party. The first division occurred in 1905 when a group of young Civilistas headed by José Matías de Manzanilla, objecting to the party's reluctance to pass certain social legislation, formed the Partido Civil Independiente. Together with defectors from the Constitutionalist party of Andrés

<sup>3</sup>Miro Quesada, Autopsia, pp. 196, 356.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 356.



Cáceres, they formed the so-called parliamentary bloque which was to play a significant role in the first Leguía regime (1908-1912).<sup>5</sup>

The second crisis arose when Augusto Leguía abandoned the party organization to create his own personalist faction and perpetuate himself in power. When in 1911 he attempted to manage the results of the congressional election to give himself a parliamentary majority, a struggle developed with the bloque. The president's plan was thwarted,<sup>6</sup> but the confrontation laid the basis for later conflicts between the Leguistas and other Civilistas.

By 1912 the party had split into three differing groups: the traditional segment headed by Javier Prado, the Leguistas, and the bloquistas.<sup>7</sup> A fourth group, one of young intellectuals, abandoned the party in 1915 to help create the National Democratic party.

This successive splintering underlined the party's political bankruptcy and encouraged a trend toward an undue usurpation of power by the executive. In a 1914 speech at San Marcos, Victor Andrés Belaunde warned his audience of the latter trend and specified three reasons for it. First, there was a parliament dominated by local and provincial interests which perpetuated themselves in office by postponing or failing to call for elections -- a parliament which was ineffective in checking and balancing the president's power because of its exaggerated devotion to him.<sup>8</sup> Second, there was "the crisis of the

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<sup>5</sup>Miro Quesada, Autopsia, p. 401.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Basadre, VIII, 3799.

<sup>8</sup>Belaunde, pp. 38-39.

middle class." Due to the lack of small industry, small property, and small commerce, this class was almost completely dependent on the bureaucratic positions provided by the government and the foreign economic interests, thus lacking in needed independent power.<sup>9</sup> The Civilistas ignored this group's political potential, but Leguía was to base much of his success upon its unfulfilled desires. A third factor was "the crisis of the ruling class," which did not serve as a controlling force against abuse and illegality but rather supported them. Its main concern became preservation of power, and in this quest it contributed to the factional bickering characteristic of parliament since the early 1900's.<sup>10</sup>

To these three causes for social and political crisis, World War I added economic pressures which led to labor unrest throughout the nation. Workers were protesting high prices, low wages, long working hours, and the monopolization of food supplies.<sup>11</sup> And, together with members of the middle class, they were also objecting to the "vieja politica" of the Civilistas and to the stranglehold they retained on power. These protestations, however, remained ineffective until Leguía organized the dissidents and made their aspirations his theme in the 1919 presidential election.

#### The election of 1919

Leguía's power rested on the faction he had built during his first regime and on the constituency of middle class elements, including students and lower-ranking army officers, and some workers and artisans

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid. pp. 80-84.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. pp. 84-85.

<sup>11</sup>New York Times, July 5, 1919, p. 11.

attracted by his promises of a "Patria Nueva." The personal courage he had displayed in the abortive May 29, 1909, coup against his government, the tough nationalistic stance he had assumed against Chile and Colombia, and the mere fact that he had succeeded in completing his term all won him widespread admiration and support and laid the basis for his resurgence as a powerful political force. Most important, however, were his struggles against the traditional Civilistas and the bloque which in 1919 made him the symbol of the anti-oligarchic movement.<sup>12</sup>

As was the case of Irigoyen in Argentina and Alessandri in Chile, Leguía's slogan of "Patria Nueva" satisfied the growing middle class by promising it increased power at the expense of the traditional oligarchy. He pledged to begin a national "saneamiento," to reform parliament, to improve the electoral laws, and to renovate all "methods." He also guaranteed to lower the cost of living, to support the students' demands for university reforms, to recapture Tacna and Arica, and to strengthen the army.<sup>13</sup>

While Leguía was offering a basic revision of Peru's political structure, the traditional parties could only provide as an alternative the creation of the usual national coalition which had maintained power in the hands of a select few. And they could have succeeded once again had an agreement been reached. The Democratic party, however, which was being reorganized, was not satisfied with the Civilista candidate Antero Aspíllaga. The Liberals thought that their leader, Augusto Durand, should get the nomination. The Constitutional party was

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<sup>12</sup>Basadre, VIII, 3617.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., VIII, 3931.

disorganized, and its founder, Cáceres, was supporting Leguía. The National Democrats presented their own candidate, the Civilista Manuel Vicente Villaran. Within the Civilista party itself old rivalries had been revived, and the selection of the aged, conservative, and uninspiring Aspíllaga as its candidate did nothing for party unity. It was no great surprise, therefore, that Leguía won the election. When Aspíllaga disputed the results, however, and president Pardo officially acknowledged the complaint by calling upon the Civilista Congress to select the new president, a coup d'état on July 4, 1919, placed Leguía in office.<sup>14</sup>

Thus ended, bankrupt and disgraced, the political experiment which had begun in 1895. In spite of its numerous deficiencies, it had provided the nation with a period of relative peace, with a generally honest administration, and with freedom of speech and press. It had granted political parties the freedom to organize; had left the judiciary fairly independent; and had given the municipalities a degree of freedom in selecting their own magistrates. The experiment had not functioned always effectively and had lost much of its vitality, but it had constituted a basis for Peru's institutional growth. Nonetheless, Leguía set out to undermine it and replace it with his own questionable personalist rule.

With the end of the experiment of 1895, the pattern of various political parties attempting to find a basis for coexistence also came to an end. For it was substituted a policy which prevented any possibility of cooperation between the forces in power and those out of it.

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<sup>14</sup>Miro Quesada, *Autopsia*, p. 444. *New York Times*, July 5, 1919, p. 11.

The latter were persecuted for being, or merely on suspicion of being, Civilistas, and their members were jailed or exiled. Beginning in 1919 Peruvian politics assumed a virulence highlighted by the absence of even one law of amnesty during the regime's eleven years, or Oncenio as it came to be called. The same harshness was to continue undiminished during the governments which followed Leguía.<sup>15</sup>

### The Oncenio

Once in office, Leguía proceeded to consolidate his position. Though his campaign had been based on an anti-oligarchic platform, he began to create his own oligarchy which was perhaps less cultured and capable than the previous one. Criticism by the press was not welcomed, as La Prensa, El Comercio, and El Mercurio Peruano soon discovered. The first was taken over by the regime; the other two were temporarily shut down and their owners and editors exiled. Local elections were abolished, and the initial hopes of greater regionalism were frustrated by a growing centralism. The regime weakened regional congresses, suppressed municipalities and replaced them with "Juntas de Notables" named by the Minister of the Interior, abolished departmental juntas, and placed congressional elections on the level of a spoils system.<sup>16</sup> The two houses of Congress became the meeting place of the regime's close friends and of subservient local caciques. This situation explains why the treaties with Colombia and Chile were approved, how the railroads could be given in perpetuity to the Peruvian Corporation (1923), and how the Brea and Pariñas oil fields were taken over by foreigners, in spite of popular opposition in each case.<sup>17</sup> The judiciary

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 3944.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., IX, 4229.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

was equally undermined by the appointment of political favorites. The constitution of 1860 was replaced by one containing social and political reforms which were never carried out. The long tradition against re-election, respected by all past political leaders including Ramon Castilla and Piérola, was broken first in 1924 and again in 1929.

To ensure his position Leguía also acquired the most modern weapons, enlarged and strengthened the police force, increased the use of police investigations, and placed spies in every social class. Consequently, while before him it was easier to reach power than to maintain it, he made it most difficult to obtain it and easier to keep it.<sup>18</sup>

The traditional political parties either were absorbed into the regime or were persecuted. The Civilistas, as the principal target, became the object of special vilification in the regime's information media. This propaganda campaign, together with the anti-Civilista tradition prevalent among many intellectuals since the days of Manuel Gonzalez Prada, were instrumental in making anti-Civilismo quite fashionable by 1930.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, a whole generation of intellectuals was reared during the Oncenio to hate Civilismo. Many of them, according to Miro Quesada, later became Apristas or Aprista sympathizers and assumed the leadership of the anti-Civilista campaign.<sup>20</sup>

To be sure, the displacement of the Civilistas was only political. Their economic and social power remained intact, and many actually benefited from the material progress fostered by the Oncenio.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., IX, 4220-21.

<sup>19</sup>Miro Quesada, Autopsia, p. 450.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 451.

The axis upon which the Oncenio rested was foreign loans and investments. In 1920 Dr. Alberto Salomon, the Peruvian Foreign Minister, stated: "The increase of our economic capacity rests mainly on the investment of foreign capital and ... therefore, the primary basis of our economic policy is in offering to such capital the greatest possible facilities in order that it may develop our unexplored riches."<sup>21</sup> Thus, while in 1919 direct foreign investments had been L.P.\* 73,000,000, by 1927 it had increased to L.P. 99,000,000, with the money coming mainly from the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and Italy and invested principally in mining, agriculture, and various manufacturing industries.<sup>22</sup>

Such capital certainly contributed to the development of the country, and the favorable balance of trade figures were used to show that Peru was economically healthy. However, an official report of the United States Department of Commerce acknowledged that much of the profit from mining went abroad,<sup>23</sup> and J. H. Durrell, overseas manager of National City Bank, declared in 1927 that Peru's "principal source of wealth, the mines and oil wells, are nearly all foreign owned, and excepting for wages and taxes, no part of the value of the production remains in the country...."<sup>24</sup> In January, 1928, the vice-president of the Foundation Company, a construction concern, stated that

<sup>21</sup>Peruvian Yearbook, 1921, p. 56.

\*Peruvian Pound, based on British monetary system.

<sup>22</sup>Ministerio de Fomento, Chart.

<sup>23</sup>James Carey, Peru and the United States, 1900-1962 (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), p. 60.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

the present low value of Peruvian money was due mainly to the fact that, despite the figures which showed a favorable balance of trade, Peru had an unfavorable balance of payments since metals, minerals, and oils were in the hands of foreigners, and they only sold in the country enough of the exchange received for exports to cover their operating costs.<sup>25</sup>

While encouraging foreign investments, Leguía resorted to foreign loans to finance many of his projects. Between 1920 and 1929 eleven such loans were contracted, for L.P. 16,145,620 or about \$70,000,000.<sup>26</sup> They were gladly granted by New York bankers in spite of the recognized weakness of the Peruvian economy and the knowledge that they were probably keeping Leguía in power.<sup>27</sup> The security granted for each loan varied, but gradually the Peruvian economy was being pawned to foreign interests. A 1922 loan was secured by mortgaging the petroleum duties; another in the same year by empowering the creditor to organize a small private company to sell guano; four others received between 1924 and 1926 were serviced by a property tax; and for the Peruvian national loans of 1927 and 1928 the government pledged all tax revenues, except those earmarked for other foreign loans, plus

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid. See Chapter VIII for a more detailed treatment of this problem.

<sup>26</sup>Emilio Romero, Historia económica del Perú (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1949), pp. 442-43.

<sup>27</sup>Carey, p. 62. See pp. 66-80 for a more extensive view of U.S. bankers' loans to Peru.



the income from the postal and telegraph services. To supplement these external money transactions, Leguía made frequent use of internal loans whose amount and number also increased steadily.<sup>28</sup>

Though a large portion of the money was used for administrative purposes and as payment for outstanding debts, some of it went into extensive public works in Lima, irrigation projects, the building of roads and railroads. Some critics, however, insisted that for the amount of money invested, a great deal more should have been accomplished. Others charged that the public works unduly benefited those in power, or even that they had been a complete waste. All recognized that the loans had had a corrupting influence on the government. The extent of such corruption was revealed during a 1932 United States Senate investigation of loan practices by U.S. banks to foreign governments. It was shown that though Leguía was honest, his son Juan and numerous members of the regime had used their position to receive bribes and other favors from foreign interests.<sup>29</sup>

Amidst the illusion of prosperity, an opposition to the Oncenio had been forming since its early days. It consisted of the traditional Civilista rivals; Leguistas who had split with the president for personal and factional reasons, including the re-election of 1924 which had denied German Leguía Martínez his chance to succeed to the presidency; those segments of the population alienated by the Oncenio's dictatorial methods; the students and intellectuals resentful of the regime's failure to implement university reforms; the workers who were

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<sup>28</sup>Ernesto Galarza, "Debts, dictatorship and revolution in Bolivia and Peru," Foreign Policy Reports, VII (May 13, 1931), 113-114.

<sup>29</sup>Carey, pp. 53-59.

dissatisfied with rising prices; and an increasing number of military officers who opposed the reorganization of the Guardia Civil in 1924 as a mobile force under the direct control of the president, and who felt dishonored by the Tacna-Arica treaty and the Leticia settlement with Colombia.<sup>30</sup>

The catalyst which gave impetus to these dissidents and which rendered possible the termination of the Oncenio was the crippling of Peruvian exports by the economic crisis of 1929, the flight of short term capital to the creditors' countries, and the cessation of foreign loans.

### The revolt of Arequipa<sup>31</sup>

The revolt of 1930 which ended the Oncenio came in the midst of similar political unrest throughout Latin America. It began in Arequipa and was directed by a military-civilian committee comprising such personalities as José Luis Bustamante y Rivero, Manuel Vinelli, and Clemente Revilla, and headed by Lieutenant Colonel Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro. That the revolt was sparked by Arequipa came as no surprise, for the city had made known its dislike of Leguía's centralist policies early in the regime. Shortly after 1919 a committee for Arequipa served for many years as the reviewing center of plans for a possible rebellion.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Galarza, p. 116; "Documentos de la revolución Peruana," Revista Chilena, XIV, No. 123-124 (July-August, 1930), 736.

<sup>31</sup>The major sources on the revolt are: El Comercio; Revista Semanal; Mundial; Toto Giurato, Peru milenario (Lima: Editorial Ecos, 1947), III.; Diego Canacho, La revolución de Agosto de 1930 (n.pl.: n.pb., n.d.); Rosa Romero Rodríguez, Historia de la revolución de Arequipa (Lima: n.pb., 1930).

<sup>32</sup>Canacho, pp. 5-7.

Military preparations by the rebels had been going on at a fast pace since the appointment of Sánchez Cerro, a long-time conspirator against Leguía, as battalion commander in Arequipa in early 1930. The committee of Arequipa, backed by the military commander of Puno, Lieutenant Colonel Armando Sologuren, attempted to enlist the support of a similar revolutionary committee in Lima, but failed after the dates set for an uprising were continuously postponed.<sup>33</sup>

When the revolt came, it caught the nation and the government by surprise, as revealed in Leguía's letter of resignation.<sup>34</sup> The president, however, had received news of a possible military coup planned for August 29th, but apparently did not feel overly threatened by it judging from the newspaper coverage he allowed of the recent rebellion in Bolivia. The rebels had, in fact, set the uprising for August 29th for three reasons. First, a plane from the Fawcett Aviation Co. was to arrive in Arequipa on that day and the conspirators were planning to expropriate it, thereby gaining an Air Force. More important, military maneuvers were to be held on that day and, therefore, rebel troop movements could be camouflaged. Finally, August 30th was to be the "Day of the Police," and the latter, which was loyal to Leguía, was involved in making preparations for the event.<sup>35</sup> But on August 21st the rebels learned that news of the plot had leaked out and that members of the Guardia Civil were being issued machine guns. The uprising was, therefore, rescheduled and carried out the next day.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Romero Rodríguez, pp. 11-12.

<sup>34</sup>See El Comercio for month of August, passim; Giurato, III, 862.

<sup>35</sup>Romero Rodríguez, p. 12.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

The insurgents' program and their criticism of the Oncenio was contained in a manifesto published in Arequipa. It began by saying that the document was not the product of a political party, caudillo, or self-interest group, but was an expression of the national sentiments and desires which Leguía had suppressed. It then went on to attack the government for its corruption and waste, for its fiscal irresponsibility which was endangering the independence of the nation, and for its heavy and unfair distribution of taxes. It also condemned the creation of monopolies, the sale of petroleum concessions, and the mortgaging of national wealth and resources which had accentuated Peru's subjugation to foreign capital. "To promise the construction of railroads and then sell in perpetuity the ones we have... to offer the country an unreal sense of economic well-being and then have our custom house run by foreigners can only take place in the programs of cynical and highly perfidious rulers."<sup>37</sup>

The manifesto also attacked Leguía for depriving the judiciary of its independence; for making Congress a subservient extension of the executive; for centralizing control of municipalities; for depriving the universities of their autonomy and the press of its freedom; for divesting the individual of his liberties; and for attempting to replace the army with a personal police.<sup>38</sup> The rebels promised to reverse this trend by moralizing and normalizing the institutional and economic life of the nation; by revising the constitution and holding the freest elections ever; by returning institutional rights to the judiciary and Congress; by guaranteeing freedom to the

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<sup>37</sup>Giurato, III, 867.

<sup>38</sup>El Comercio, August 8, 1930, p. 4.

press and the individuals as long as "social morality and public order" were not affected; by making of honesty a "national cult"; and by prosecuting all those who had or would illegally accumulate wealth. They made the cause of the Indian that of the revolution; pledged support for the working class; and asked for the reorganization of the army to prevent it from becoming a politician's tool. Finally, the leaders of the revolution pledged that they would not

continue to mortgage our wealth for the idiotic anxiety of boasting about unreal progress. With a system of honorable parsimony in public expenditures we shall stimulate the vital forces of the country and we shall develop its innumerable natural and industrial possibilities in order to establish our own autonomous economy.<sup>39</sup>

This manifesto the rebels offered as the basis of Peru's "national regeneration."<sup>40</sup>

Although many of the provisions of the Manifesto of Arequipa were never to be implemented by Sánchez Cerro, he continued to espouse the nationalist sentiments therein expressed throughout his months in power. Nationalism was, in fact, the most important characteristic of the Manifesto. Its general intent was to reject the political and economic methods employed by the Oncenio, and to protect Peru's way of life from foreign doctrines. Though the nationalism in the Manifesto proved not to be so dangerous to foreign interests as it was at first thought, it was to anticipate a more active intervention by the government in the nation's social and economic questions. It also forecasted an inevitable confrontation between the new forces

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<sup>39</sup>Giurato, III, 867-68.

<sup>40</sup>El Comercio, August 28, 1930, p. 4.

coming to power and the growing number of supporters of social and political doctrines which were, or seemed to be, intent upon the destruction of the nation's institutions.

Following the news of the revolt the government attempted to preserve an air of calm. It issued a communique stating that the rebellion was based on a forged army ordinance containing news of the discharge of some officers and soldiers and of a cut in salaries. But as the departments of Arequipa, Puno, Cuzco, Madre de Dios, Apurimac, Moquegua, and Tacna joined the uprising, the cabinet resigned.<sup>41</sup> On August 23rd the cadets of the naval school at Callao joined student rebels fighting loyal troops. On August 24th, as Leguía was being escorted back to the palace after attending the usual Sunday horse races, a group of students followed his car crying anti-government slogans. The shouts were taken up by the crowds which, at the time, were coming out of the movie theaters.<sup>42</sup> On the same day Leguía named an entirely new military cabinet, but as he was about to administer the oath, high army officers led by General Manuel M. Ponce intervened, refused to recognize the appointees, and asked for the president's resignation. Abandoned by the army and threatened by menacing mobs outside the palace, Leguía placed the government in the hands of a military junta headed by General Ponce. But still confident of the validity of his regime, he wrote in the letter of resignation: "If it is believed that Peru can progress without me, well and good (en buena hora)..."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>New York Times, August 24, 1930, p. 11.

<sup>42</sup>New York Times, August 26, 1930, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>Giurato, III, 862.

With the end of the Oncenio, an internal struggle developed in the military. The new junta seemed reluctant to give power to a mere lieutenant colonel, Sánchez Cerro, and sought ways of preventing it. Its authority, however, was weakened by the moral responsibility of its members in having supported Leguía almost until the end, and by the opposition offered by lower-ranking military officers who had been the ones most adamant in demanding the president's resignation.<sup>44</sup> The charges against the Ponce junta of being friendly to Leguismo were seemingly confirmed when Ponce provided Leguía with a safe-conduct out of Peru and on August 25th allowed him to embark on the Cruiser Grau headed for Panama. As soon as the news reached Arequipa, Sánchez Cerro wired the Grau ordering it to return not to Callao but to Mollendo, a southern port in the hands of the rebels.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, crowds gathered in the streets of Lima attacking the houses of Leguía and of some members of the Oncenio. The disturbances culminated in a mass demonstration at the presidential palace. The crowd, led by students, clamored for the punishment of Leguía and the other leaders of the Oncenio for their misdeeds and for misuse of public funds. After an audience with representatives of the demonstrators, Ponce appeared on the balcony and assured the populace that their demands would be met. Later he announced that the junta had declared Leguía prisoner on the Grau and had ordered the cruiser back to Callao.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Victor Villanueva, El militarismo en el Peru (Lima: Empresa Gráfica T. Schenck, 1962), pp. 62-64.

<sup>45</sup>The Times (London), August 27, 1930, p. 10.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

The order sent to the Grau only partially satisfied the rebels, who demanded that power be turned over to Sánchez Cerro. Ponce offered the "hero of Arequipa" the Ministry of War and sent representatives to Arequipa by plane to discuss the matter. Sánchez Cerro, however, refused to talk to them and confiscated the plane.<sup>47</sup> On August 26th Ponce conferred with various military leaders and with the heads of the military colleges and was informed that the army was overwhelmingly behind Sánchez Cerro.<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, when Sánchez Cerro arrived in Lima on August 27th amidst one of the largest popular demonstrations witnessed in the city, the junta peacefully relinquished its power.

Thus began what was to be one of the most violent periods in the history of Peru. The nation not only was faced with a seemingly insurmountable economic crisis but was also burdened by political and social uncertainties: profound and virulent differences between branches of the Civilista party; increasing social unrest unleashed by the depression and by the presence of new political doctrines; decaying or corrupted national institutions; and an administrative vacuum produced by lack of trust in the bureaucracy which Leguía had courted so well. The question was whether an inexperienced soldier could guide the nation toward a solution of these problems.

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., August 28, 1930, p. 10.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST SÁNCHEZ CERRO REGIME, AUGUST 1930-MARCH 1931

Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro was born in Piura on August 12, 1889, the fourth of seven brothers of a modest bourgeois family.<sup>1</sup> In 1906 he entered the military school of Chorrillos, graduating in 1910 as a second lieutenant. After serving in various frontier outposts until 1912, he was promoted to lieutenant and was assigned to a battalion of engineers. On February 4, 1914, he was wounded five times while distinguishing himself in the coup which overthrew Billinghurst. He spent several months in a hospital, and then, promoted to captain, was sent to Washington D. C., both as a military attaché and as a patient at a local hospital.

After his return, he resumed his military career by being made head of the Jefatura Provincial of Carabaya and assuming other duties in the mountainous regions of Madre de Dios and in the Department of Loreto. As a supporter of President Pardo, he apparently opposed the coup which overthrew him on July 4, 1919, for only eleven days later in the Department of Loreto he led the first revolt against Leguía

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<sup>1</sup>Sánchez Cerro's life and personality have not received much attention. The most valuable work in this area is the sympathetic biography by Carlos Miro Quesada Laos, Sánchez Cerro y su tiempo (Buenos Aires: Editorial El Ateneo, 1947). This work is the principal source for this chapter's description of Sánchez Cerro's life and personality. Added information and impressions are obtained mainly from both the Peruvian and foreign press.

but failed. On August 21, 1922, in Cuzco he again rebelled, occupied the city, but was forced to surrender after being wounded. To remove him from the Peruvian scene, Leguía sent him to Spain as a military observer.

In Europe, also, Sánchez Cerro remained militarily active. He joined the Spanish army and ably took part in the fourteen-months' campaign of the Riff in Morocco. Subsequently, financially aided by Leguía, he traveled to Italy to study military science and finally to France, his favorite home away from home. In Paris he joined the circles of exiled Peruvians, many of whom were influential Civilistas, winning a number of important supporters for his subsequent endeavors.

Finally permitted to return to Peru, Sánchez Cerro was promoted to lieutenant colonel and, in spite of warnings from advisors, Leguía appointed him commander of a battalion of engineers in Arequipa. Shortly after he arrived there, he took over the leadership of the movement that was destined finally to overthrow Leguía, trained the troops, and carried the enterprise to a successful conclusion.

The scarcity of available material permits only a sketchy view of Sánchez Cerro's personality. He was dark-skinned, small of stature, and weighed no more than 120 pounds. He made a fetish of courage and of physical prowess though he was rather sickly and delicate. During his military career he lost three fingers on his left hand and his right arm was partially paralyzed.<sup>2</sup> United States Ambassador Fred Morris Dearing described him as a gambler who "is at home in the midst of military activity, and greatly prefers the dangerous life and lots

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<sup>2</sup>The Times (London), August 29, 1930, p. 12.

of action to any course which calls for thought and patience."<sup>3</sup> In fact, he lived most of his life as a conspirator, specializing in clandestine meetings and the planning of coups--a training which later served him well in defending himself against similar activities by his own enemies. Though he had been a tireless plotter, he adopted a very high opinion of the legitimacy of power during his own regime,<sup>4</sup> and he did not seem to find such an attitude hypocritical.

He was slow to forget animosities--no matter how ancient--and to settle them he was fond of resorting to dueling. During the Leticia conflict, for example, it was alleged that he was more adamant in the pursuit of the conflict because the head of the Colombian expeditionary forces was General Alfredo Vasquez Cobo with whom he had had a heated argument a number of years earlier, and supposedly he threatened to fly to the war front to challenge Vasquez Cobo to a duel.<sup>5</sup>

A man of quickly changing moods, Sánchez Cerro would appear to some of his visitors cruel and barbaric, to others understanding and gentle, solicitous and obliging. His anger could be as easily vented against generals as against a subordinate, a lapse in military etiquette which cost him the support of many high-ranking military officers, and which led General Pablo Martínez, for one, to seek a duel with Sánchez Cerro. The latter incident was prompted by the way Martínez was treated after his attempted coup of February 20, 1931,

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<sup>3</sup>Bryce Wood, The United States and Latin American wars, 1932-1942 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 442.

<sup>4</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup>Wood, p. 457.

against Sánchez Cerro had failed. He was taken to the presidential palace and there, he complained, was "offended by him [Sánchez Cerro] in the harshest and most unacceptable manner and words without considering my superior rank...A similar act cannot be found in the history of our Republic."<sup>6</sup>

Sánchez Cerro was highly ambitious and self-confident, a quality which fed his rather simplistic view of politics and economics. In speaking of the hard economic times which Peru was undergoing, he once said: "If I had a month's time I would put everything in order, but 'they' won't let me." He then went on to say that he knew two very good financiers, his orderlies, and explained: "These two orderlies, when I was in the army, made sure that I never lacked money and that at the end of the month I would have some money left over. A financier has to do the same thing with the nation. Consequently my orderlies are financiers."<sup>7</sup>

Sánchez Cerro's education was limited and his speech full of popular expressions; he had a superstitious belief in the reading of cards; he was evidently fond of women and parties, especially parties of the criollo type where he would often join in the marinera; he had a well known disregard for money and its accumulation; was financially honest; and, as president, he refused to display the pomp common to most previous rulers. These qualities contributed to the development of the "man of the people" image which surrounded him and which he proudly cultivated.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>La Noche, May 22, 1931, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 59-60.

In the Manifesto of Arequipa, Sánchez Cerro had presented himself and his followers as nationalists without spurious political compromises and arrangements and divorced from the old politics and politicians. In keeping with this statement and with the belief in the moral superiority of the armed forces, the first junta he appointed was made up entirely of military men, none above the rank of colonel. However, being principally a man of action, and lacking both the experience to govern and the political acumen to choose able advisors, Sánchez Cerro's first six months in power were confused and unproductive. His main concerns proved to be the prosecution of those public officials who had allegedly benefitted financially from the Oncenio and the implementation of the nationalist sentiment expressed in the Manifesto of Arequipa. Thus, he purged the Supreme Court of the Leguía appointees, nationalized the administration of the educational system by decreeing that the directors of the Office of Public Instruction had to be Peruvian, and named study groups to look into the various contracts signed during the Oncenio, promising cancellation of those which endangered national sovereignty.<sup>9</sup>

The most important step toward the "national purification" promised in the Manifesto, however, was the Tribunal de Sanción Nacional created on August 30, 1930, and officially installed on September 12. Composed of ten justices and four prosecuting attorneys equally divided into two committees--one made up of members of the Supreme Court and the other of military officers, each with jurisdiction over certain types of cases--the Tribunal had as its main concern the investigation of the

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<sup>9</sup> Mundial, September 13, 1930, p. 2.

financial dealings of members of the Onconio. It was also empowered to revise the contracts made by the previous government and to alter the concessions and privileges granted by Leguía. It was given sweeping prosecuting and judicial powers, with access to all available public records, and was to enjoy the same standing as the Supreme Court.<sup>10</sup>

While the Tribunal carried out the investigations, all public officials and all those who had had dealings with the public treasury were ordered not to leave the country except by special permission of the Junta. In addition, their bank accounts were to be frozen, although monthly withdrawals could be arranged with the Tribunal. Critics attacked this last provision as irresponsible on the grounds that it diminished the amount of disposable capital when the country could least afford to do so<sup>11</sup> and caused undue hardship to people whose guilt had not been proven.<sup>12</sup>

All along the Tribunal's main target had been Leguía and his family. Leguía was believed to have placed \$38,500,000 in London banks, and his son, Juan, was accused of having substantial amounts of money in Italian, United States, French and English banks.<sup>13</sup> Other members of the family were charged with similar financial dealings, but their cases were the object of much less publicity. On September 15 Leguía and three of his sons were formally charged with corruption and

<sup>10</sup>El Comercio, October 29, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup>Juan Francisco Tamayo, Memoria que presenta al Congreso Constitucional de 1931 (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1931), pp. 22.

<sup>12</sup>Mundial, October 3, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>New York Times, October 5, 1930, p. 3.

with mishandling of public funds,<sup>14</sup> and they were then secretly tried.<sup>15</sup> On January 8, 1931, the former president and his sons, Juan, Augusto, and José, were found guilty and condemned to pay a fine of 25,000,000 soles or about \$7,625,000.<sup>16</sup> The case against the three sons and other members of the Ouncenio could easily be proven, but not that against the ex-president. He apparently had not taken part in the run on the treasury, though he condoned it, and in fact, financially, he had been doing much better before he assumed office in 1919.<sup>17</sup> However, no other verdict but guilty would have been acceptable to the active elements of Peru's public opinion. Judging from the numerous popular demonstrations against him and from the practically unanimous denunciation of the Ouncenio, not only in Lima and Callao but also in many other parts of the country, Leguía had already been tried and found guilty.<sup>18</sup>

Quite apart from any moral responsibility of Leguía for the financial irregularities of the Ouncenio, the nation also preserved fresh memories of the imprisonments, sufferings, and exiles inflicted by the fallen regime. For many of these and other misdoings he could not legally be prosecuted, yet it was felt that he should somehow answer for them, and his conviction on charges of corruption thus served in

<sup>14</sup>El Comercio, September 16, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>New York Times, September 21, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1931, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup>See Leguía's will, Giurato, III, 875.

<sup>18</sup>For a treatment of the popular and press attitudes toward Leguía, see El Comercio, La Tribuna, Mundial, Revista Semanal, La Noche, La Cronica.

effect as a means of punishing him for much else besides. The governments which ruled until his death shared this view and were reluctant to free the ex-president for the added reason that he still commanded sufficient political and economic power to make trouble. Thus Sánchez Cerro, who had jailed him on September 1, 1930, in San Lorenzo, a prison made notorious by Leguía himself during the Oncenio, kept him there; created the Tribunal to discredit him; and used resentment against him to remain in power. And the Samanez Ocampo junta that followed Sánchez Cerro continued this policy in spite of the former president's declining health and two Supreme Court decisions in his favor. The first had ruled the Tribunal incompetent to try Leguía,<sup>19</sup> and the second had decreed that, according to the constitution and the civil code, former presidents and ministers of state could not be tried for treason or corruption without the express authorization of Congress.<sup>20</sup>

With its principal victims in prison, the Tribunal still continued its investigations, reaching into every segment of Peruvian society including the church. The archbishop of Lima, Emilio Lisson, accused of questionable financial dealings both with Leguía and with foreign organizations, deemed it necessary at this point to leave Peru for the less harrowing atmosphere of Rome.<sup>21</sup> The Tribunal's often indiscriminate methods ruined many reputations and forced the removal of numerous civil servants from the employment lists. It burdened the nation's economy by freezing needed capital, discouraging

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<sup>19</sup>New York Times, July 9, 1931, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., August 13, 1931, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>La Crónica, June 2, 1933, p. 1.



investments, and indirectly contributing to the exodus of national and foreign cash reserves. It increased unemployment by halting a number of public work projects while it reviewed the original contracts, and, most important, it further divided an already disunited people.<sup>22</sup> All this was brought about for a handful of convictions.<sup>23</sup>

The Tribunal, representing Sánchez Cerro's most treasured creation, lost much of its impetus when he was overthrown in March 1931. Though the Samanez Ocampo junta allowed it to exist for one month beyond its pre-established time (April 31, 1931), it desisted from emphasizing its role. And, in his December 1931 memoria to Congress, the junta's Minister of the Interior, Francisco Tamayo, labeled the Tribunal a failure and an unnecessary expense.<sup>24</sup>

Aside from the promise of punishing all those who had benefitted from the questionable economic practices of the Onecenio, the Sánchez Cerro junta had also come to power with the slogan "Peru for the Peruvians,"<sup>25</sup> and had vowed that it was going to review and alter Peru's economic relations with foreign capital. The most conspicuous foreign presence was that of the United States, both for the huge holdings of its investors and also because of the close association of the United States government and private citizens with the Leguía regime. During the Onecenio, in fact, United States citizens administered Peru's customs service and ran the Office of Public Education; a United States mission ran Peru's navy; another, contracted by the Peruvian government, administered the tax collection agency; and a United States

<sup>22</sup> Mundial, March 13, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Tamayo, pp. 21-22.

<sup>25</sup> New York Times, April 3, 1931, p. 8.

financial expert drew up Peru's budget. In addition, Leguía's laws and United States tax-collectors saw to it that foreign-controlled oil, mining, and United States industries in general received special tax exemptions.<sup>26</sup>

Charges that Leguía had mortgaged the nation to foreign bankers and other interests had been made in the Manifesto of Arequipa,<sup>27</sup> and promises that the situation would be corrected were also given. But by the time Sánchez Cerro was established in power, he had become less fervid in his denunciation of foreigners. It was evident that any infringement on foreign capital at the height of the world depression might have prompted the closing down of more enterprises, thus further increasing unemployment. And it is likely that Peruvian financial and business concerns--together with foreign interests--did not fail to emphasize to the junta the international consequences of a too nationalistic economic policy. On the other hand, the August revolution had stirred very strong radical and nationalist passions in Peru with which the junta had to reckon. The expectations of radical elements, of which organized labor and students were perhaps the most vocal, had grown beyond the intended aims of the Manifesto of Arequipa. They were demanding a fundamental change in the social and economic structure of the country.<sup>28</sup>

Sánchez Cerro and the junta were not social or economic revolutionaries, and they certainly were not willing to accede to the demands

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<sup>26</sup>Arnold Roller, "Revolt in Peru," Nation, CXXXI (September 17, 1930), 292. See also Carey, Peru and the U.S.

<sup>27</sup>See Chapter I.

<sup>28</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.

of the radicals. They were, however, nationalists and thus attempted to find a middle course between the nationalist demands of the radicals and the desires of such conservative elements as the National Agrarian Society, which spoke for the nation's large landowners, the industrial and banking interests, and the representatives of foreign capital. Thus, the junta limited some of the foreign influences in Peruvian life, as when it removed United States citizens from the Office of Education and conducted a review of all foreign contracts signed by Leguía, leading to the cancellation of some of them. It also initiated a food distribution program for the unemployed and their families in the Lima-Callao area;<sup>29</sup> ordered a sixty-day moratorium on payments of rent for those earning thirty soles or less per month;<sup>30</sup> and appointed a commission containing student representatives to study ways of reforming the universities.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, the junta was not overly damaging to foreign interests. When deputations from students and labor unions asked Sánchez Cerro for "freedom from Yankee imperialism"<sup>32</sup> he would offer noncommittal replies and urged them to wait until the economic crisis passed.<sup>33</sup> He also appealed to the workers to "patriotically" withhold demands for higher wages until the economic situation improved, and sent troops to break up strikes.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup>El Comercio, September 19, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>30</sup>El Peruano, September 18, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup>See below, pp. 22-24.

<sup>32</sup>New York Times, August 30, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup>El Comercio, October 1, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup>New York Times, September 4, 1930, p. 5.

The attempt to find a middle road apparently did not satisfy either group. The workers continued to organize and carry out strikes throughout the nation, and the moneyed interests impatiently called for even more repressive measures toward such "communist inspired" disorders.<sup>35</sup> By November, 1930, discontent with the general working conditions and with increasing unemployment had reached dangerous proportions among many sections of the industrial working class, and since the most prominent industrial employers in Peru were foreigners, the unrest assumed a vehement anti-foreign flavor. On November 8th, at the copper mining center of La Oroya, a convention of the "Mining Union of the Center" was inaugurated with the sponsorship of the communist-controlled Confederación General de Trabajadores Peruanos (C.G.T.P.), the largest labor union in the country. The main object of the convention was to organize the workers in the copper mines, and the government at first made no attempt to interfere with it. For two days the proceedings were peaceful. But when the manager of the Cerro de Pasco Co., the main employer in the area where the convention was being held, protested vigorously to the junta over its failure to take action, the government sent orders to La Oroya to make a show of firmness, and about forty of the delegates were arrested and put on a special train to Lima. The miners of La Oroya telegraphed news of the incident to the headquarters of the C.G.T.P. in Lima, demonstrated in the streets against the police, and seized two Americans as hostages.<sup>36</sup> In Lima the Federation, threatening a general strike, held a meeting with the Minister of the Interior Gustavo Jiménez and won the release

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<sup>35</sup>ibid.

<sup>36</sup>ibid.

of the delegates and of the other incarcerated workers.<sup>37</sup> When news of the agreement was made public, the two hostages were freed and the general strike seemed to have been called off. In fact, in Callao the railroad workers, who had already stopped all rail communication with La Oroya, went back to work.<sup>38</sup>

News of the settlement in Lima, however, was slow to spread through the mining region. In the village of Mal Paso, fifteen miles from La Oroya, about one thousand miners attempted to march to La Oroya to lend support to the strikers there, unaware that the convention delegates had been released. The police, apparently equally ignorant of the settlement, barred the bridge on the road to La Oroya and ordered the miners to stop. When they did not, the police fired into the crowd killing and wounding an unknown number of people. The crowd left the bridge, rushed into the village, and lynched two U.S. employees and an Austrian who had just arrived to manage the local hotel. In the repression that followed, the miners lost twelve of their own men.<sup>39</sup>

The events at Mal Paso and a similar bloody incident at the textile mill in Vitarte, where four men were wounded by the police while protesting the management's attempts to fine a co-worker, led to the call of a general strike by the C.G.T.P.<sup>40</sup> In the meantime, the emergency situation in the mining region led to the massive withdrawal of foreigners from the area and to the temporary suspension of operations

<sup>37</sup> El Comercio, November 12, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., November 12, 1930, p. 2. (after ed.)

<sup>40</sup> La Crónica, November 23, 1930, p. 2.

by the Cerro de Pasco Co. The economic consequences of the latter measure were quickly felt by the Central Railroad which depended almost entirely on the freight revenues from the Cerro de Pasco Co., and ultimately in Lima itself.<sup>41</sup> On November 13th Sánchez Cerro was notified by the Cerro de Pasco Co., through Ambassador Dearing, that unless he guaranteed "the wiping out of the workers' anti-foreign movement," the Cerro de Pasco mines would be closed down for an indefinite period, leaving 16,000 more men without jobs.<sup>42</sup> Under pressure from Harold Kingmill, the manager of the Cerro de Pasco Corp., Dearing, and other foreign interests, and faced with widespread social disorders which even the moderate press believed to be communist-inspired,<sup>43</sup> the junta sent two hundred soldiers to reinforce the police in the mining centers and, using a decree several years old, it ordered the military mobilization of the power, light, and transportation workers.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the C.G.T.P. was declared dissolved on the grounds that it was controlled and run by foreign agents.<sup>45</sup> The two decrees severely curtailed the ability of the workers to strike, and a new general strike attempt on November 12th was broken within twenty-four hours.

The effects of the outbreaks at La Oroya and Mal Paso were far-reaching. The incidents further inflamed relations between labor and

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<sup>41</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.

<sup>42</sup>New York Times, November 15, 1930, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup>Mundial, November 14, 1930, p. 1. Revista Semanal, November 13, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.

<sup>45</sup>El Comercio, November 13, 1930, p. 2.

the business community. Indeed members of the latter, under the auspices of the National Agrarian Society and with the cooperation of leading foreign as well as domestic businessmen, proceeded to form the Unión Social party to combat radical tendencies and to protect the rights of private property.<sup>46</sup> The new party was not happy with the way the junta had handled the situation at La Oroya, considering its methods too ineffective. It was especially critical of the Minister of the Interior, Jiménez, whom it considered a dangerous radical.<sup>47</sup> The Unión Social, therefore, demanded that he be removed and that the whole junta be reshuffled so as to create one more sympathetic to its interests.<sup>48</sup>

These charges and demands came at a time when the junta had developed internal strains on how to deal with the social question.<sup>49</sup> As a result, on November 21st the entire junta resigned, and on the same day a new one was appointed. The reconstituted junta, containing four new ministers, two of whom were civilians, meant a step to the right by Sánchez Cerro. Apparently he had not gone far enough, for on November 24th about four hundred members of the Unión Social met in the Plaza San Martín in Lima to show their support for Sánchez Cerro but also to protest the membership of the new junta.<sup>50</sup> The rightists, however, had won a major concession from Sánchez Cerro when he appointed Manuel Augusto Olacoea as Minister of Finance. Olacoea, a respected

<sup>46</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.

<sup>47</sup>ibid.      <sup>48</sup>ibid.

<sup>49</sup>El Comercio, November 23, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>50</sup>New York Times, November 25, 1930, p. 16.; The Times (London), November 26, 1930, p. 14.

conservative banker, was persona grata with the foreign creditors of Peru and with the nation's financial and business interests.<sup>51</sup>

Olaechea inserted a note of professionalism into the government's economic proceedings by finally drawing up a budget. However, the drastic economic measures which he proposed seemed to have been intended mainly for the benefit of foreign creditors. In fact, rather than ask for a moratorium on the payment of the foreign debt, which constituted by far the largest single budget expense, he proposed its continuance at the expense of needed social expenditures. Thus, while urging payment on the more than 267,000,000 soles debt, he asked that: work on all nonessential public works be terminated; that legislative action on all projects involving considerable expenditures of public funds be suspended; that all public employees receive a cut in salaries until the situation improved; and that the amount of pensions be reduced.<sup>52</sup> The Olaechea budget was at first accepted by the junta, but apprehension developed over whether the proposed cuts in expenditures could be implemented. This led to Olaechea's resignation. The new Minister, believed to be more under the influence of Sánchez Cerro than Olaechea had been, announced that as one of his first acts as Minister, he intended to press for a moratorium on the payment of the foreign debt.<sup>53</sup>

The membership of the junta appointed in November 1930, as expected, failed to please other important elements of Peruvian public opinion.

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<sup>51</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.

<sup>52</sup>El Comercio, December 18, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>53</sup>The Times (London), February 23, 1931, p. 11.



Gustavo Jiménez, the "dangerous radical" whom the Unión Social helped remove from the junta and reportedly the leader of the left within Sánchez Cerro's spectrum of support, had become somewhat disenchanted with his leader over suspected ties between Sánchez Cerro and members of the old Civilista party,<sup>54</sup> some of whom were probably members of the Unión Social. The charge of Civilista ties was even repeated by the official newspaper La Prensa which was still under the influence of the removed members of the junta. It accused the new Ministers of the Interior, Finance, and Development of being Civilistas,<sup>55</sup> and printed a letter by a certain Major Velasquez (probably a pseudonym for journalist Federico More) labeling Sánchez Cerro himself a Civilista.<sup>56</sup> The next day the newspaper was shut down, but the accusation was repeated by elements of the army and navy in a manifesto censuring the junta for making political agreements with men and groups who had already been discredited because of their role in Peru's past political life.<sup>57</sup> All these charges were emphatically denied by Sánchez Cerro.<sup>58</sup>

The changes brought about by the November 21st crisis had failed to bring Peru any closer to peace. On the contrary, Lima experienced widespread unrest in street clashes between rightist and leftist groups,<sup>59</sup>

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.; Miro Quesada, Sanchez Cerro, p. 91.

<sup>55</sup>Miro Quesada, p. 91.

<sup>56</sup>Federico More, Zoocracia y canibalismo (2d ed.; Lima: Editorial Todo el Mundo, 1933), p. 16.

<sup>57</sup>New York Times, November 23, 1930, p. 16.

<sup>58</sup>El Comercio, November 25, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup>New York Times, November 25, 27, 1930, pp. 16, 1.; The Times (London), November 26, December 31, 1930, pp. 14, 16.

which were serious enough for some observers to express the fear that Peru was on the road to Bolshevism.<sup>60</sup> Throughout the difficulties, however, it appears that Sánchez Cerro rarely came under personal attack.<sup>61</sup> This remained so even when the conservative junta of November 21st, dedicated mainly to the pursuit of law and order rather than social justice, escalated the tempo of repression. The arrest of both military men and civilians increased, the press was muzzled<sup>62</sup> and many of the newspapermen were jailed or exiled,<sup>63</sup> labor activities were more severely curtailed, and the political parties inimical to the junta were suppressed. The headquarters of Apra--the most important political opponent of Sánchez Cerro--were closed down, its leader Haya de la Torre was denied permission to return to Peru, and its newspapers, La Tribuna and Apra, were shut down.<sup>64</sup> Individuals were thrown in jail on arbitrary charges or were persecuted as "communists" although their only fault was that of speaking openly.<sup>65</sup>

As already suggested, the criticism found in the opposition newspapers which were still functioning was not generally directed at Sánchez Cerro personally.<sup>66</sup> There was, in fact, no widespread demand for his overthrow. The opposition seemed to want to influence the

<sup>60</sup>The Times (London), December 1, 1930, p. 14.

<sup>61</sup>Revista Semanal, Mundial, passim.

<sup>62</sup>El Comercio, December 5, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup>Mundial, February 6, 1931, p. 1.; Revista Semanal, December 18, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup>Mundial, February 6, 1931, p. 1. See Chapter IV for more information on Apra.

<sup>65</sup>Revista Semanal, December 8, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup>See Revista Semanal, Mundial, La Crónica, Variedades, passim.

direction of the junta and implement the promises of the Manifesto of Arequipa. The failures of the junta were blamed on a palace clique which was believed to be advising Sánchez Cerro only with its own personal benefit in mind.<sup>67</sup> This same clique, according to some critics, precipitated Sánchez Cerro's overthrow on March 1, 1931, because it advised him to seek the presidency in a general election while still remaining at the head of the junta.<sup>68</sup> The election, in fact, proved to be the issue which was to coalesce the junta's opponents.

In assuming office Sánchez Cerro had stated that the junta would resign as soon as it found the country ready for civilian government.<sup>69</sup> On November 8, 1930, he had convoked a Constitutional Assembly for May 2, 1931, its 80 members to be chosen in a March 31st election. According to the convention decree, the Assembly was to work for 60 days on a new constitution and on the electoral framework which would return the nation to constitutional government.<sup>70</sup> Objections were raised, however, on the grounds that the size of the Assembly would be too small to properly represent the various political, economic, and geographic interests of the electorate and that it would be susceptible to manipulations by the executive. Bowing to such criticism, the junta then increased the number to be elected to 120.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Luis Antonio Eguiguren, El la selva política. Para la historia 1930-1933 (Lima: Sanmartí y Cia., 1933), p. 18.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>New York Times, August 30, 1930, p. 16.

<sup>70</sup>El Comercio, November 9, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>71</sup>La Crónica, December 1, 1930, p. 3.

The increase in representation, however, could not still increasing rumors that Sánchez Cerro was going to set himself in power for at least the next eight years. For example, in an interview with a correspondent of the Chicago Tribune which attracted wide attention in Peru, he was reported to have said that he was going to "occupy the presidential chair" for the eight years which he considered necessary to complete his "program of reconstruction."<sup>72</sup> Sánchez Cerro was quick to deny that statement and accused his enemies of maliciously spreading such rumors. He also complained to a visitor that every reporter that spoke with him misinterpreted his words--at times intentionally.<sup>73</sup> When asked by the same visitor, however, whether he would accept the presidency if offered, he replied that he would but only for one term because he considered the principle of no re-election the best guarantee for democracy.<sup>74</sup>

Three days after Sánchez Cerro's expressed willingness to accept the presidency if offered, El Comercio, a Civilista spokesman since 1905 and one of the principal Sánchez Cerro supporters, began to publish telegrams and minutes of a number of organizations ranging from market vendors in Lima and Callao to a local political party in Ancash. They urged the junta to forego elections for a Constitutional Assembly and hold, instead, elections for president of the Republic. In the

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<sup>72</sup>Revista Semanal, December 29, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, p. 94.; El Comercio, January 19, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>74</sup>El Comercio, January 19, 1931, p. 3.

same telegrams, Sánchez Cerro was pressed to become a candidate.<sup>75</sup> To what extent this campaign was representative of the unmistakable popular support Sánchez Cerro enjoyed is hard to say, but it fed the already numerous rumors surrounding Sánchez Cerro's presidential intentions. Early in February, Antonio Eguiguren and Gustavo Jiménez went to the palace and urged Sánchez Cerro not to accept the candidacy, for according to them it was favored neither by the people nor by the army. Sánchez Cerro assured them that he was not a candidate and gave them a written statement to that effect.<sup>76</sup> Yet, on February 6th a decree was issued by the junta stating that because of the evident public desire a general election for president would be held together with the election for a Constitutional Assembly.<sup>77</sup> The announcement intensified the newspaper campaign in favor of Sánchez Cerro's candidacy. More committees were created throughout the nation, and the "hero of Arica" began to appear in public in civilian clothes. On February 12th, finally, Sánchez Cerro stated that he expected to be the only candidate for the presidency.<sup>78</sup> That declaration, however, also coalesced the junta's opposition. Sánchez Cerro's right to run for the presidency was generally recognized, but it was justifiably felt that, simply because he had overthrown Leguía, he had not won the right to inherit the presidency. Had Sánchez Cerro remained as the head of the junta while the elections were held, their honesty could not be guaranteed.

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<sup>75</sup>See El Comercio, January and February, 1931.

<sup>76</sup>Eguiguren, pp. 18-19.

<sup>77</sup>El Comercio, February 7, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup>The Times (London), February 14, 1931, p. 11.

Indeed there were already some signs that electoral fraud might be in preparation. The weekly Mundial, for example, found some individuals who had registered from nine to eighteen times, and many others at least twice.<sup>79</sup>

As the tempo of criticism against the junta mounted, so did the suppression of political forces and the harassment of the press. This show of strength, however, was ill-conceived, for the junta lacked a strong and well defined power base from which to fend off the increasing opposition. The armed forces, the church, the press, the students, organized labor, and some regional interests had become almost totally disenchanted with the "hero of Arequipa." Though the opposition to the junta had been considerable for some time, it was fragmented until the election became an issue.

The military had never fully united behind the regime. The high-ranking officers who had been excluded from power by the young colonels worked from the beginning for the removal of Sánchez Cerro. Two generals in particular, Manuel Ponce and Pedro Pablo Martínez, were especially active in this task, leading a number of attempted coups. Their effectiveness, however, was diminished by their former Leguista connections. Similarly, the navy leadership had never been closely allied to the junta, because it felt excluded from power, controlling only one ministry--its own. In addition, Leguía during his regime and even after had a considerable amount of support within navy circles.<sup>80</sup> Those officers

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<sup>79</sup>Mundial, February 13, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup>The Times (London), February 21, 1931, p. 12.

of both services who had believed in the Manifesto of Arequipa were likewise unhappy over what seemed to be an abandonment of the program, and such dissatisfaction had been reflected in the events of November, 1930. Furthermore, the army, divided as it was into five military regions, was susceptible to the pressures of regional demands.<sup>81</sup> Thus, in the south of Peru and especially Arequipa where centralism was considered one of the greatest evils in Peru, there was growing indignation over Sánchez Cerro's failure to carry out the promises of greater local autonomy contained in the Manifesto of Arequipa. This feeling was shared by many of the military officers stationed in the area, and it was one of the main reasons given in justification of the regional coup of February 21, 1931, which finally triggered the final overthrow of Sánchez Cerro.<sup>82</sup> Last but not least, additional military opposition throughout the country seemed to have appeared when the junta proposed a cut in pay as a means of coping with the growing economic crisis.<sup>83</sup>

The church, for its part, had been antagonized by a decree on October 8, 1930, legally establishing divorce and obliging the clergy, under pain of imprisonment, to obey an 1897 law prohibiting religious marriages if the couples had not previously undergone a civil ceremony.<sup>84</sup> The hierarchy had also resented the Tribunal's investigation of its connections with the Oncenio.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Benjamin Chirinos Pacheco, Hacia un Peru nuevo (Arequipa: Imprenta Rumbos, 1932), p. 31.

<sup>82</sup> See Chapter III for rebels' program.

<sup>83</sup> Chirinos Pacheco, p. 32.

<sup>84</sup> El Comercio, October 9, 1930, pp. 4-5.

<sup>85</sup> La Crónica, June 2, 1933, p. 1.

Leguistas or suspected accomplices, the most avid opponents of the regime, showed every willingness to employ their still considerable financial resources for rebellious enterprises. And the Apra party, already one of the most influential political forces in the nation and actively persecuted by the regime, had come to the conclusion that Sánchez Cerro's permanence in power endangered its own existence. Much of the press was equally vigorous in its opposition to the junta, and organized labor had continued to oppose the junta's repression of labor unrest.

Finally, the students were also part of Sánchez Cerro's growing list of opponents. The overthrow of Leguía had renewed and intensified their demands for university reforms. The rights of more student participation in the running of the universities which they had won in 1919 had been revoked by the Oncenio, and all further demands had been denied. With the overthrow of Leguía the students received an opportunity to seek the implementation of the entire 1919 University Reform program. But they also began to fear the re-establishment of the pre-1919 Civilista stranglehold on the universities, and they saw General Ponce's appointment of José Matías de Manzanilla as rector of San Marcos as the first step in that direction.

To dramatize the students' demands for representation on the University Council, for the right to censure professors, and for the opportunity to participate in the election of the rector, the Student Federation of Peru on October 11, 1930, for the first time in its history, resorted to the occupation of San Marcos.<sup>86</sup> As the Universities of Cuzco and Trujillo joined in the protest, the junta closed

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<sup>86</sup> Tomás Escajadillo, La revolución universitaria de 1930 (Lima: Cia. Sanmartí, n.d.), p. 37.



the University of San Marcos for forty days and appointed a commission headed by Manuel Vicente Villaran and containing three student representatives to propose the necessary reforms. The government's position at the time was expressed by the Minister of Justice and Education, Lieutenant Colonel Armando Sologuren, who viewed a radical reform of the university as being within the junta's own framework of rebuilding all public institutions "corrupted by the previous regime."<sup>87</sup>

Diligently, the commission worked to find a solution. It agreed to abolish the Faculty of Theology, to create a Faculty of Economic Sciences and Law, both criminal and civil, and to establish a premedical curriculum. But when it came to the questions of censure, election of rectors, and student representation on the University Council, the members could agree on principle but not on percentages and methods. The student representatives were supported by the two young professors on the commission, but the five other members, truly fearing the effect of "student power" on the progress of education, were reluctant to grant students too large a share of the representation on the council.<sup>88</sup>

In spite of a twenty-day extension in the life of the commission, full agreement could not be reached, and the junta was asked to pass final judgment on some of the arguments. When a ruling failed to come, the students prepared for battle, and on January 19, 1931, they again occupied the University. For twenty days they held San Marcos while talks were held between their representatives and the junta. Though Sánchez Cerro seemed willing to grant more to the students, his new

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<sup>87</sup> Mundial, October 17, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Escajadillo, p. 64; Mundial, October 31, 1930, p. 4.

civilian Minister of Education, Bustamante i Rivero, was not, and on February 5th he resigned.<sup>89</sup> In the meantime, the students strengthened their position by calling for labor support and receiving it in the form of sympathy strikes.<sup>90</sup> Faced with this coalition and stressing the need to preserve "the principle of authority," the junta sent the police to surround the University.

On February 6th the students were informed that, urged by Bustamante's successor, the junta had signed a new University Statute which incorporated many student demands. They received the document late at night and held a meeting to discuss it. Early on February 7th the Statute was accepted, but before the students could make this known to the junta the police invaded the grounds of the University and gave an ultimatum that it be evacuated. A battle ensued resulting in the death of one student, the wounding of several others, and the imprisonment of many more.<sup>91</sup>

The incident was a tragic example of Sánchez Cerro's impetuosity. The University Statute was considered by all to be the most advanced Peru had ever had. It granted the students participation in the University Council and in the election of the rector and the right to censure professors. Yet, in his haste to preserve the "principle of authority," Sánchez Cerro failed to derive from it all the political support and the praise which he deserved. In fact, the incident further damaged his relations with the students and added to his growing

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<sup>89</sup> Mundial, February 13, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>90</sup> Escajadillo, pp. 84-85.

<sup>91</sup> Escajadillo, pp. 96-100.

list of opponents. Since it was then common to shift the blame for all political blunders and all unpleasant incidents to a Civilista palace clique advising Sánchez Cerro, the San Marcos affair can perhaps be added to that long list.

As noted above, the proposed presidential candidacy of Sánchez Cerro was the issue which gave some unity to the opponents of the junta, and which served as a catalyst for an increasing number of attempted rebellions. Thus, in the space of one month (January 13 to February 13) four coups were uncovered and about 300 people were arrested.<sup>92</sup> The revolt, however, which marked the beginning of the end of the Sánchez Cerro regime, broke out in Arequipa on February 21, 1931, and quickly spread to Cuzco, Puno, and Mollendo. The rebels set up a revolutionary junta headed by David Samanez Ocampo, an old enemy of Leguía, and containing some members of the Decentralist party. On February 24th, it issued a manifesto asking for the removal of Sánchez Cerro and immediate general elections with full guarantees to all, representation for minorities, and the secret and obligatory vote. It also called for a new constitution; lower cost of living; freedom of the press; economic and administrative decentralization; a fairer graduated tax system; revision of the foreign debt and establishment of a moratorium on its repayment; and the creation of new sources of national wealth.<sup>93</sup> The rebels had the sympathy of the commanders of all military regions except the second, in central Peru, which remained faithful to Sánchez Cerro.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Mundial, February 13, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup>El Comercio, March 3, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup>Chirinos Pacheco, pp. 31-32.

Sánchez Cerro at first responded to the coup by cancelling the presidential election on February 23rd. But this concession, rather than satisfying the rebels, strengthened their determination to remove him.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, the junta censored the press even more strictly, encouraged popular demonstrations in its own favor, armed its civilian supporters,<sup>96</sup> and dispatched expeditionary forces to the south and to the north. The forces sent to the more critical areas of the south were commanded by Gustavo Jiménez, who accepted the leadership of the mission apparently because he believed the coup to be directed by Leguistas. His fierce opposition to Leguía was well known, as he had preferred to leave the army and drive a truck rather than serve the Oncenio. Jiménez had assumed that a February 20th attempted coup in Callao by the Leguista Pedro Martinez had been the signal for a national uprising and that the February 21st revolt in the south was part of the plot to bring the old dictator back to power.<sup>97</sup>

Jiménez' expeditionary force was embarked on the steamers Apurimac and Rimac, but never reached its destination. The navy decided to cast its deciding role with the rebels, who by that time controlled the nation's principal productive areas.<sup>98</sup> On February 27th the head of the navy, Alejandro G. Vincés, issued a manifesto which announced that, in order to end the ensuing civil war, he had ordered

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<sup>95</sup>The Times (London), February 26, 1931, p. 12.

<sup>96</sup>See Navy manifesto, El Comercio, March 2, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., February 20, 1931, p. 1. (aftn ed.)

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1931, p. 4.

the Apurimac and Rimac to stop and had sent planes to the north and the south to propose the formation of a new junta to be headed by the President of the Supreme Court.<sup>99</sup>

Isolated from the two military regions of the north and the south and with a large contingent of its own forces rendered inoperative by the navy, the junta was forced to accept the navy's plan. On March 1, 1931, at a meeting in the presidential palace of the leading citizens of Lima--including military, religious, political, education, labor, communication and government representatives--Sánchez Cerro resigned. He stated in his prepared comment that he took such a step in spite of the fact that he retained enough military power to suppress the rebellion. However, he wanted to spare the nation any further bloodshed.<sup>100</sup> Certainly, the latter consideration was important in his decision to relinquish power, but it is doubtful that Sánchez Cerro had the necessary military strength to remain in office much longer.

A few days after the announcement, Sánchez Cerro left the country. It was agreed that the overriding reasons for his fall were his political inexperience, his association with the Civilistas, the electoral law, and his proposed plan to run for the presidency while remaining at the head of the junta.<sup>101</sup> Even some of the press organs which opposed him, however, still refrained from vilifying the "hero of Arequipa," and in fact they continued to place much of the blame for his actions on the advice of a selfish small group of political favorites.<sup>102</sup> His reputation, therefore, was not irreparably damaged

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.      <sup>100</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, pp. 104-107.

<sup>101</sup>See Mundial and Revista Semanal, March, 1931.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

by his six months in power. In addition, though segments of the power structure had rejected him, a large portion of the population--judging from the demonstrations in his favor after his resignation--still supported him.<sup>103</sup> His departure for Europe on March 7th, therefore, was marked with the promise that upon his return several months later to participate in the presidential campaign, he would find a large reservoir of good will.

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<sup>103</sup>See El Comercio, March 2-7, 1931.

## PART II

THE SAMANEZ OCAMPO JUNTA AND THE ELECTION OF 1933.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SAMANEZ CCAMPO JUNTA

Following Sánchez Cerro's resignation, political instability continued for several more days. At the March 1st meeting at the presidential palace, the president of the Supreme Court, Ricardo Leoncio Elías, was sworn in as head of the new junta in accordance with the navy's manifesto. The remaining two positions on the junta were filled by Colonel Manuel Ruiz Bravo, the head of the army, and Commander Alejandro G. Vincés of the navy.

The rebels in the north accepted the new leadership, but those in the south rejected it because Ruiz Bravo was the man who had ordered the expeditionary force under Jiménez south to quell the rebellion.<sup>1</sup> In addition, they wanted to choose the president of the junta themselves<sup>2</sup> because they feared that Elías would be unable to guarantee electoral freedom and to contain Leguista and Civilista drives for power.<sup>3</sup>

Elías sent a commission to Arequipa to discuss the differences with the rebels there, but before it reached the city Jiménez and his expeditionary force landed in Callao, marched on the presidential palace and removed the junta.<sup>4</sup> The coup proceeded very smoothly

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, March 3, 1931, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>El Comercio, March 6, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 11.



because Elias, to prevent bloodshed, had refused to take defensive measures.<sup>5</sup> Elias, in fact, had sealed the fate of the junta the moment he allowed Jiménez and his men to disembark. He must have been well aware of this, even though he had received Jiménez' promise of loyalty,<sup>6</sup> and he could not keep those men prisoners on the ships without creating an explosive situation.

The latest coup, apparently, was not a pro-Sánchez Cerro affair, even though some soldiers made known their loyalty to the former president by shouting out support for him in the streets of Lima and Callao.<sup>7</sup> Even if, initially, Jiménez had harbored any thought of reinstating Sánchez Cerro to power, he must have been aware of the fact that the rebels in the south would never accept such an arrangement and would have resorted to a civil war. Three reasons, in fact--all unrelated to any desire to bring back the "hero of Arequipa"--were advanced as the basis for his rebellion. First, Jiménez and his men were resentful of the treatment they had received, especially at the hands of the navy. Secondly, Jiménez believed that the Elias junta did not represent the political realities of the country, and the rebels in the north and the south certainly shared that belief. Finally, Elias and his junta were suspected of having set free Leguista elements and of actually having brought some of them back to power.<sup>8</sup>

When in apparent control of the central region, Jiménez issued the expected manifesto expressing the usual support for the aims of

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>The Times (London), March 7, 1931, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-2.

the August, 1930, Manifesto of Arequipa. But it also recognized the validity of some of the rebels' demands, and extended to them and to all the members of the navy, air force and police an invitation to form a national coalition to bring Peru back on the road to constitutionality.<sup>9</sup> All were quick to agree except for the rebels of the south. But Jimenez' chances of bringing peace were brighter than those of his predecessors. The head of the southern junta, Samanez Ocampo, in fact had sent him a telegram indicating that an agreement could be reached. This change of attitude was probably due to the fact that the leaders of the south, wishing for a more radical application of the Manifesto of Arequipa, especially as it related to regional autonomy, felt more akin to the leftist Jimenez than to the conservative-sponsored navy junta.<sup>10</sup> Its hesitation to join the national coalition proposed by Jimenez was only a delaying tactic whose aim was to force any new government to accept its program. Thus, eventually, its leaders entered into negotiations with Lima, and after six days of intensive and hard bargaining an agreement was finally reached. The new junta was to be presided over by David Samanez Ocampo, the head of the southern junta and a bona fide adversary of the Civilistas, the Leguistas, and Sanchez Cerristas. The seven ministries comprising the junta were allotted largely on a territorial basis. Two went to members of the southern junta, one each to representatives of north and central Peru, and one to a representative of the eastern part of the country beyond the Andes. The army and the navy were also to have one each.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>The Times (London), March 7, 1931, p. 12.

It was also stipulated that general elections be called quickly in accordance with the Manifesto of Arequipa; that members of the junta declare themselves non-candidates for any office in the general elections; and that the issue of decentralization be a subject of discussion in the Constitutional Convention which was to meet after the election. The agreement also expressed satisfaction with Sánchez Cerro's original withdrawal from the election and with his departure for Europe.<sup>11</sup>

On March 11th the new junta, composed entirely of civilians except for the Ministers of War (Jiménez) and Navy (Commander Federico Díaz Dulanto), assumed power. Because the rebels of the south came to occupy only two ministries, it was concluded that Lima had won the power struggle with Arequipa,<sup>12</sup> and the next few months proved that Jiménez was the most influential member of the junta.

With relative peace re-established throughout the country, the junta worked to further normalize the political situation, to stabilize the financial conditions, and to improve the economic state of the nation. It appointed a number of commissions to study the question of the budget; to review the status of the Bank of Peru and London, the country's oldest and second largest, and to suggest ways of heading off threatened bankruptcy; to look into the question of administrative decentralization; and--most important--to produce an acceptable electoral law.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., March 9, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup>Mundial, March 13, 1931, p. 2.

The junta also implemented some needed reforms on the basis of the Kemmerer commission reports. Dr. Edwin Kemmerer, the Princeton professor who had been engaged by a number of Latin American nations to study and hopefully suggest remedies for their fiscal problems, was also invited by the Peruvian government in December, 1930. The invitation, extended by Sánchez Cerro through Finance Minister Olacoea, had reflected the great influence, already discussed in Chapter II, which Peru's foreign creditors and the nation's financial and business interests exercised over the junta during the Olacoea tenure as Minister of Finance. Kemmerer arrived in Peru in January, 1931, and completed his work by April, 1931. On April 17th, the Samanoz Ocampo junta, on the basis of the Kemmerer report, decreed a monetary devaluation by doing away with the sol de oro created by Leguía in February, 1930, and unrealistically valued at U.S. \$.40. The devaluation to \$.28 was carried out in the hope of stabilizing the currency and increasing commercial activity.<sup>13</sup> On April 18th, the junta also decreed the establishment of a stronger Central Reserve System, and it subsequently ordered the re-establishment of the Superintendency of Banks to strengthen the nation's banking system. In addition, a strict bank law was promulgated.

Also in April the junta decreed that the Caja de Depósitos y Consignaciones transfer to the Caja Fiscal all revenues from taxes earmarked for the payment of the nation's debts. This was viewed as a break in the tutelage that the money lenders exercised over all national revenues.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>La Prensa, April 20, 1931, p. 3. New York Times, April 23, 1931, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup>Mundial, April 3, 1931, p. 2.

In May the junta liquidated the Caja Nacional de Ahorros, since most of its capital consisted of direct or indirect government obligations which could not be paid,<sup>15</sup> and in accordance with its own commission's report, it ordered the liquidation of the Bank of Peru and London.<sup>16</sup>

The junta also suspended payment on all Peru's debts until December 31, 1931; made available loans to farmers through the newly fashioned Agricultural Bank; ended the monopoly of public transportation in Lima enjoyed by the foreign-owned Metropolitan Co., by authorizing the creation of new companies and permitting service by colectivos.<sup>17</sup> In addition, it initiated a new social concept when in April, 1931, it established a special general tax on motor vehicles and earmarked its yield for assistance to the country's unemployed.<sup>18</sup> In so doing, the junta: extended unemployment compensation from the Lima-Callao area to the rest of the country; made possible for the first time the collection of accurate unemployment statistics; and recognized the government's obligations to the jobless.

The junta's most important achievement, however, was its handling of the general elections held on October 11, 1931. It laid the basis for their success late in March, 1931, when it appointed a commission to draw up an electoral law which was finally approved several months later. Its members were Alberto Arca Parro', Jorge Basadre, Carlos Manuel Cox, José Antonio Encinas, Federico More,

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<sup>15</sup>La Crónica, May 30, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>El Peru, May 26, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Tamayo, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup>Romero, p. 440.

Luis Alberto Sánchez, Carlos Enrique Telaya, Cesar Antonio Ugarte, and Luis E. Valcarcel. It is clear that the commission did not contain any known Civilista nor Sánchez Cerrista, and apparently for this reason it was censured by the first group and condemned by the second.<sup>19</sup> It did include, however, two of the most important leaders of the Apra party, Luis Alberto Sánchez and Carlos Manuel Cox. In spite of the limited political organizations represented, the commission gave Peru its best electoral law up to that time.

The law provided for all male Peruvians over the age of 21 and able to read and write to register in the electoral register. If a person was not allowed to register, the officer in charge of such matters had to set in writing the reasons for the denial and give a copy to that individual, who could then appeal to the Departmental Court of Elections. The electoral register, including the names and addresses of the voters, was to be made public daily and, on the day registration closed, the registrars throughout the country were to cable the names and the number of each libreta electoral to the National Court of Elections in Lima which subsequently made the lists public.<sup>20</sup>

The law made registration and voting obligatory. However, the members of the clergy, the armed forces, and those who had lost their civil liberties or their citizenship were not allowed to vote. To encourage the voters to go to the polls, the libreta electoral was made an essential document for finding public employment, for exercising various professions, for entering into contracts, for obtaining benefits

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<sup>19</sup>Mundial, March 20, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>La Prensa, April 19, 1931, p. 1.

from any social service such as unemployment compensation, etc.<sup>21</sup>

The law also provided careful directives for the selection of election officials at the local, departmental, and national levels. Each district within a province had to have at least one voting station for every 150 registered voters, and it was to be manned by three voters chosen by drawing lots before the candidates or their representatives.<sup>22</sup> At the departmental level the election was to be supervised by a court presided over by the longest-serving justice of the department's highest court and containing as many members as there were provinces. They were to be selected by lot from a prepared list of public notaries and lawyers living in each of the department's provinces, and they had to fulfill the same qualifications as candidates for Congress. It was stipulated, however, that no more than three of the court's members could belong to or be supporters of one political party or candidate, and all were subject to censure and removal if valid charges were brought against them.<sup>23</sup> At the national level stood the National Court of Elections with ultimate power of decision. It was made up of nine permanent members, of whom one was to be the longest-serving justice on the Supreme Court. Of the remaining members, each of the four national universities (San Marcos, Trujillo, Arequipa, Cuzco) sent one, and the others were chosen by drawing one name from four different urns containing the names of departmental election officials.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., May 27, 1931, pp. 2, 6.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., May 27, 1931, p. 1.

To guarantee the honesty of the election, the vote was to be secret; no public officials could take part in any political activity, and the armed forces were prohibited from endorsing any candidate. And, except for those units assigned to maintain order and to guard the polling stations, they were restricted to the barracks from the morning of the election to twenty-four hours after its completion. In addition, the police could not arrest any elector while the polls were open and within the twenty-four hours after their closure, except in cases where he was caught in the act of committing the crime. And all political parties had to stop their propaganda immediately before the voting began.<sup>25</sup>

As soon as the voting ended at 5 P.M., the president of each polling station was to seal the urn with strong paper, sign it in the presence of and in conjunction with all the other electoral officials, and send it--together with a signed statement listing the people who had not voted--to the nearest post office. A copy of those who had failed to vote was also to be made available to the various political parties. From the post office the urn was to be immediately delivered, under proper escort, to the Departmental Court of Elections. In public sessions the Court would proceed to establish if each urn was accompanied by the proper documents and if the number of ballots corresponded to the number of voters to which the president of the poll station had attested.<sup>26</sup> Then the Court would finally begin to compute the returns province by province, with representatives of each candidate free to supervise the count and compare it with the registration

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., May 27, 1931, pp. 2, 6.



list. If the results were not questioned, the counted ballots were burned; if they were, the Court heard all complaints on the matter and then publicly passed judgment, taking care not to destroy the ballots which had been the subject of the dispute or which had been invalidated. Finally, it signed an acta justifying its reasons for declaring the election valid or not and sent it to the National Court which would pass final judgment on all disputed returns.<sup>27</sup>

The voters were to choose a president and 145 representatives. No more than two-thirds of the representatives from each department could belong to the same political party, and, to win, a candidate had to receive at least ten per cent of the votes cast.<sup>28</sup> The electoral law made it relatively easy for anyone to become a candidate and for a political party to be legally formed. Each party was required to publish eight issues of a newspaper within two months of the election and had to register with the National Court of Elections if it ran a candidate for the presidency, and with the Departmental Court if it sought seats in the Assembly.<sup>29</sup> A presidential candidate had to be a registered voter born in Peru, at least 35 years of age, and had to have a minimum of five years residence in Peru since his 18th birthday. In addition, he had to present the signatures of one thousand registered voters supporting his candidacy, and he had to deposit one thousand soles with the National Court of Elections. For a representative, the requirements were similar. However, the age limit was 25 years, he had to be a three-year resident of the department he sought

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., April 16, 1931, pp. 1-2.

<sup>28</sup>The Times (London), October 10, 1931, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup>La Prensa, April 23, 1931, p. 2.

to represent,<sup>30</sup> needed one hundred signatures, and had to deposit only one hundred soles with the Departmental Court.<sup>31</sup>

The 145 representatives to be chosen in the election were to sit in a unicameral Assembly with the principal duty of drawing up a constitution. That task completed, it was to become the national legislative chamber, or one of the chambers, depending on the future provisions of the constitution. As for the president, the law left the length of his term to be determined by the new constitution, but it explicitly stated that he could not be re-elected.<sup>32</sup>

The electoral law failed to please anyone fully. When the junta received the draft for final approval, discontent was voiced in all quarters, and a number of attempted coups were reported to have been inspired by that dissatisfaction.<sup>33</sup> The most common complaint was that the law was cumbersome. In fact, the requirement that in order to register a person had to present a slew of identification papers---including fingerprints, a photograph, and birth, military and work certificates---made registration terribly slow and forced the junta to extend repeatedly the deadline for completing registration.<sup>34</sup> Two, however, were the issues which caused the most heated debate and which at times endangered the stability of the junta. The first concerned the stipulation that if none of the presidential candidates received 25% of

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., May 27, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>The Times (London), June 30, 1931, p. 13.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1931, p. 9.

the vote, the Constitutional Assembly was to choose the president in accordance with the Constitution of 1920. It was argued by critics that since the Constitution did not limit Congress to choose among the declared candidates the junta could press, in such an eventuality, for the election of one of its members. To dispel such suspicion, the junta finally specified that the president was to be selected only from the active candidates.<sup>35</sup>

The second and more serious issue developed when the junta accepted the commission's proposal in favor of provincial rather than departmental representation. This measure had been supported by the Apristas and other unrelated political organizations on the ground that departmental representation was anti-democratic and was part of a centralist plot by the "señores" of the capitals to hold power to the detriment of the provincial masses.<sup>36</sup> The Aprista position on this situation is enigmatic. It was a fact that the party based its power principally on the middle class and on the industrial workers. Since both were mainly urban-centered groups, the assumption is that the party should not have been afraid of the power of the "capitals." Certainly the Apristas could not depend on the overwhelming support of the rural masses which, even if pro-Aprista, were for the most part automatically disfranchised because of illiteracy. The most probable explanation for Aprista's stand is that provincial representation was seen as constituting a more secure approach to the election. To submit to department-wide representation may have meant endangering the supremacy the party enjoyed in selected provinces.

<sup>35</sup>El Peru, September 1, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup>La Tribuna, September 1, 1931, p. 1.

The Aprista position would also seem to suggest that, in spite of its avowed support for administrative decentralization, the party did not really object to centralism. Departmental representation, in fact, supported by the Decentralist party and other political organizations, especially in southern Peru, was viewed as an important element in breaking Lima's tutelage over the provinces. In the south, for example, those who advocated provincial representation were the provincial gamonales. It was not uncommon for a province with a few but powerful landlords to have as much representation as the populous Arequipa. And the experience of the south and other regions had been that the gamonales had usually allied with Lima's centralist government to give it important support in Congress in exchange for extensive political power and influence in the department. Thus, the provincial landowners, operating under the system of provincial representation, had sent representatives to Congress who were more tools of the central government in order to derive personal rather than departmental benefits.<sup>37</sup> Because of these experiences the south's departmental capitals and larger towns, headed by Arequipa, threatened to boycott the elections rather than accept provincial representation and thus play into the hands of large provincial landowners.<sup>38</sup> Finally convinced that the intransigence of the southern electorate endangered the election, and that departmental representation was more widely supported or at least less vehemently opposed, the junta decided in August, 1931, to reverse its position and accede to the demands of the south.<sup>39</sup> With this issue

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<sup>37</sup>La Prensa, July 24, 1931, p. 1. (Interview with a southern member of the junta.)

<sup>38</sup>El Peru, July 20, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., August 29, 1931, p. 1.

settled, the main obstacle to the acceptance of the electoral law was removed.

The electoral law of 1931 was in many respects similar to the electoral legislation it was meant to replace. However, it incorporated five basic features which made it superior to any of the previous laws. First, it denied members of Congress and representatives of the executive membership on the National Court of Elections. The absence of this measure in the previous legislation had allowed self-interested politicians to manipulate the elections. Second, the new law curtailed the power of the National Court in the selection of local and departmental election officials. This limitation checked the formerly pervasive influence of the National Court in the electoral process. Third, the law prevented a one-party takeover of the courts of election by limiting to one-third the number of supporters a candidate or party could have on each court. After 1899 the Civilistas, for example, by capturing control of the National Court, had determined the electoral outcome in Peru for a number of years. The 1931 law was intended to prevent a repetition of that situation. Fourth, the secret vote, as provided by the 1931 law, gave some guarantees that voters would not experience undue pressure from individuals or groups. Finally, the obligatory vote insured a greater degree of popular participation in the selection of public officials.

This detailed presentation of the 1931 electoral law has been intended to show that the Samanoz Ocampo junta and the Electoral Commission took pains to insure that the law avoid many of the pitfalls which had reduced Peruvian democracy to a limited, elitist, inter-party struggle and to make the election as representative of the desires of the voters as possible. It can be seen that throughout the

electoral process, every political party and every candidate was given the opportunity to investigate the proceedings and was given the power to appeal all decisions and practices of the electoral officials.

In its quest for a return to constitutional government, the thorniest problem faced by the junta was how to deal with Sánchez Cerro's intention of returning to Peru to participate in the election. Before going to Europe the "hero of Arequipa" had made his objectives known to the public in a manifesto and in a number of press conferences. He had repeatedly insisted that his overthrow had not been a popular movement and that the people still wanted and supported him.<sup>40</sup> His overthrow, in fact, had not been welcomed with any sizeable popular demonstration, and it actually appeared that because of it his popularity had increased. During his regime, however, he had made numerous and powerful enemies, and this was made clear when the jails were opened after March 1st. A considerable number of high military men emerged from them,<sup>41</sup> plus members of the Samanez Ocampo junta itself, the police force, influential civilians and politicians, and members of the press.<sup>42</sup> And many of them--if not always openly--worked against the return of Sánchez Cerro.

The opposition to Sánchez Cerro's return became so vocal that this question appeared to be threatening the stability of the junta and the unity of the army. As a result Jiménez, as the spokesman of both, wrote to the former president on April 19th advising him not to return

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<sup>40</sup>El Comercio, March 6-7, 1931.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., passim.

to Peru. He argued that if his victory was assured, as Sánchez Cerro insisted, his presence in Peru would jeopardize it. On the other hand, if he would accept a diplomatic post offered by the junta he could still campaign in absentia and win the presidency.<sup>43</sup> Sánchez Cerro dismissed Jiménez' advice and embarked on a ship headed for Callao. The junta countered by issuing orders to all Peruvian legations to deny him an entry visa.<sup>44</sup>

The actions of the junta toward the "hero of Arequipa" stirred differing responses in Peru's political circles. The leftist La Noche and most of the moderate press criticised the junta's action as legally untenable and politically naïve, for it had made Sánchez Cerro a greater threat by making him a martyr.<sup>45</sup> The Aprista daily La Tribuna, reflecting the militant anti-Sánchez Cerro view, argued that the junta had already been too tolerant of the "ex-dictator" who actually should have been in jail paying for his crimes.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, the Apristas launched a propaganda campaign questioning Sánchez Cerro's intelligence and honesty.<sup>47</sup> The supporters of the former president countered by organizing public demonstrations in his favor,<sup>48</sup> forming political clubs, and initiating a newspaper campaign

<sup>43</sup>La Prensa, May 17, 1931, p. 1.; La Noche, May 17, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup>El Peru, May 10, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup>See La Noche, Revista Semanal, Mundial, El Peru, passim.

<sup>46</sup>La Tribuna, May 18, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., passim.

<sup>48</sup>El Peru, May 31, 1931, p. 7.

in El Comercio urging his immediate return.<sup>49</sup> Their activities gave rise to persistent rumors of an imminent coup by the former president.<sup>50</sup>

The position of the armed forces on this whole question is not fully known, but the available information shows that it was never fixed. There were factions within the military with strong feelings toward Sánchez Cerro. The men who opposed him were obviously in command in the early days of the dispute, to judge from the April 19th letter Jiménez sent Sánchez Cerro. The protracted struggle, however, seemed to have strengthened the supporters of the former president, for the junta, through Jiménez, began to be pressured by certain elements in the army to end the unfortunate incident and allow Sánchez Cerro to return. The majority of the junta still remained opposed to this course of action, but they finally acceded to that request. Before doing so, however, some of its members demanded that Sánchez Cerro issue a manifesto vowing to remain within the law.<sup>51</sup> Such a manifesto was published from Panama; it expressed support for the electoral law and recognized the right of Peruvians freely to choose their government.<sup>52</sup> Satisfied with Sánchez Cerro's declared intentions of remaining within the law, the junta granted him permission to re-enter Peru.<sup>53</sup> Though the decision was met with a serious military outbreak in the

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<sup>49</sup>See El Comercio for the month of June, 1931.

<sup>50</sup>Mundial, June 5, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup>Rafael Larco Herrera, Memorias (n.p.l.: n.p.b., 1947), p. 136.

<sup>52</sup>El Comercio, June 24, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>53</sup>La Crónica, June 27, 1931, p. 2.



south which took several days to quell, the rest of the country accepted it peacefully.<sup>54</sup>

On July 2, 1931, Sánchez Cerro arrived at Callao. The junta took extraordinary steps to keep order in view of rumors that a popular rising would take place to bring "the hero of Arequipa" back to power.<sup>55</sup> It stationed a large military force near the port; interrupted traffic between Lima and Callao; limited telephone service between the two cities to official use only; ordered commercial centers, especially those selling liquor, to close; and enforced a state of siege to prevent all public demonstrations. It was perhaps such extensive security and the tension and resentment which it created that led to disorders. In the melee several people were wounded, though none seriously, and Sánchez Cerro's landing was delayed.<sup>56</sup> The following day, on a dock heavily patrolled by security guards, the former president was finally allowed to land, and immediately he began preparations for the upcoming presidential election set for October 11th.

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<sup>54</sup>The Times (London), June 30, 1931, p. 13.

<sup>55</sup>The Times (London), July 3, 1931, p. 14.

<sup>56</sup>El Peru, July 3-4, 1931.

## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICAL FORCES AND PERSONALITIES IN THE 1931 ELECTION

Analysts have provided only a cursory view of the 1931 election, often presenting it in the most simplistic terms and relying on a seemingly Manichean interpretation of Peruvian politics.<sup>1</sup> It would be proper, therefore, to recreate the atmosphere of the period and present the participating forces and their philosophy.

Following the overthrow of Leguía, the traditional political parties plus the new groups which had appeared during the Ousecio, such as Apra, began to organize a political apparatus in preparation for the promised general election. Though about 20 parties dotted Peru's political scene, it eventually became polarized between contending leftist and rightist political groups. Of these, the left was composed of the Communist, Socialist, and Apra parties--the latter being the best organized and most popular. The stated aim of the left was a basic reversal of Peru's social institutions, generally entailing the destruction of the traditional ruling groups. But it was unable to offer a concerted effort due to philosophical and tactical divisions. Thus, the Communists, denied the right to run their own candidates, withheld from the Apristas the massive support of the C.G.T.P.,

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<sup>1</sup>In Spanish, such a view is especially present in Aprista writings. In English, writers have been strongly influenced by Aprista propaganda. Thus, until very recently, the dishonesty of the election seemed to be taken for granted.

which they dominated; and the Socialists, representing half of José Carlos Mariátegui's Socialist party (the Communists constituting the other half), shared its mentor's distrust of the Apristas and only worked for the election of its own local candidates. The Apristas, equally unwilling to compromise, looked for alliances elsewhere.

The right was much less clearly defined than the left. It generally represented those parties and groups which, frightened by labor unrest and social upheavals and by the leftist propaganda which promised the destruction of the privileged classes and the uprooting of existing social institutions, tended to support the candidacy of Sánchez Cerro. However, one complicating factor in the election of 1931 which further contributed to political polarization was the presence of the traditional rivalry between Leguista and Civilista forces. Both of these groups would normally be classified as "rightist," but the former tended to side with the Apristas and the latter with the Sánchez Cerristas.

The election seemed to be placing Peru at a crossroad in its development: Sánchez Cerro and Haya de la Torre represented two clear alternatives, even though both delineated a kind of nationalism. The first sought the support of the traditional forces whose power rested in agriculture and commerce, the traditional middle class of artisans and traders, the peasantry, the unorganized urban masses, and sectors of the unemployed industrial workers. The latter sought to protect Peruvian nationality by removing the country from its economically neo-colonial position through rapid industrialization. His appeal reached the middle sections of white-collar workers created by industrialization, professional people, intellectuals, students, some labor unions,

segments of the rural population converted to the ideal of social reform, and the industrial peasants and workers--especially those employed by foreign concerns.

Both candidates worked to increase the polarization of the political scene by vying for the support of the extremist forces which were attempting to organize on the basis of opposition to Leguistas, Civilistas, Apristas, and Sánchez Cerroistas alike. Haya de la Torre and Sánchez Cerro labeled the maneuvers of the moderates as a futile attempt to sap their forces, and both predicted that eventually the center would have to choose either extreme. The political atmosphere, in fact, was not one of moderation, and the moderates further weakened their cause by reviving the discredited practice of seeking a compromise candidate in the same undemocratic manner as had been done in 1915 and also as had been attempted in 1919. When this failed, the center ended up by nominating two candidates.

The presence of all these varied elements represented a new development in Peruvian politics and contributed to making the 1931 election one of the most important and exciting in the nation's history. From the beginning, however, the campaign was marred by an ever increasing tempo of violence which bode ill for the future of Peru. This violent characteristic of the period will become evident in this and following chapters.

As the date of the election neared, the Peruvian electorate was asked to choose the new president from among four candidates. All were well known personalities. Haya de la Torre and Sánchez Cerro were the younger ones, both relatively new in Peruvian politics. Arturo Groves and José María de la Jara y Ureta--the two moderate candidates--were

political veterans of the pre-1919 era. While the first two were to shape personalist parties and enjoyed widespread popular support, the latter two received the support of a number of minor political parties seeking a return to the political methods of the pre-Ileguía era. In addition, while the programs of the Apristas and Sánchez Cerristas were clear, those of the other candidates were plagued by confusion resulting from the number of minor regional interests that they represented. A description of the structure and philosophy of the various parties and candidates will reveal the stated differences.

### The APRA party<sup>2</sup>

The Apra party (Partido Popular Revolucionario Americano) was officially founded in Mexico on May 7, 1924. It is generally held that it developed out of the struggle for university reforms in Peru a few years earlier, from which came also its principal leaders. The founder was Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, born in 1895 the son of an aristocratic family of Trujillo which could trace its line back to the first conquerors of Peru, and which had been very active in local and national politics. After attending some of the best schools in Trujillo, Haya de la Torre went first to the University of Cuzco and

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<sup>2</sup>Most of the material for this section is taken from Haya de la Torre's writings. They include: El anticomunismo y el Apra (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ecúmena, 1936); ¿A dónde va la América? (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Americanas, 1936); Consejo de la América (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1933); Política Aprista (Lima: Imprenta Minerva, 1933); Ideología y acción Aprista (Buenos Aires: Editorial Gleizer, 1933); Tercera y última del Apra (Lima: Ediciones de Cultura Peruana, 1931); Por la independencia de la América Latina (Buenos Aires: Editor Triunfante, 1927). See also the numerous articles by Haya in Por el Apra published in San José, Costa Rica. Note that this section does not consider any of the changes in Aprista ideology which may have come after 1933.

later to San Marcos, where he was elected president of the Student Federation and became involved in the movement for university reforms. In 1923, because of his leadership of the demonstration against Leguía's plan of consecrating Peru to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he was exiled and, for the next eight years, he wandered throughout the Americas and most of Europe, including Russia and England, developing the structure and philosophy of his movement and prolifically writing about it.

Structurally, the party was to develop fascist and communist tendencies, including the cult of personality and the demand for iron-bound discipline from its membership. This discipline affected even its elected Congressmen who, like all other members, became subject to expulsion from the party if disapproval of an official party action was made public. Congressmen were also expected to contribute a certain percentage of their salary to the party fund: single men were to give 20% and those who were married, 10%.<sup>3</sup> The party was thus to be partially--and indirectly--financed by public funds. The party also created youth groups to train the young to become loyal party members; formed a type of storm troops, later to be called Escuadras; and awarded membership cards only after it was ascertained that the applicant would unquestioningly follow the party ideology.

Philosophically the Apristas borrowed eclectically from various ideologies, including Marxist-Leninist doctrine and that of the Chinese Kuomintang, and tried to adapt them to the American environment. Paradoxically, Haya de la Torre hardly relied on the Mexican revolution, at the time the only successful Latin American social and economic revolutionary movement. He used it merely as one example of a successful

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<sup>3</sup>La Tribuna, November 13, 1931, p. 4.

revolution, although he did not consider it an unmitigated success. According to him the revolution's main failure was its lack of a "revolutionary apparatus" to spread its doctrine to other Latin American countries, a shortcoming which the Apristas worked to avoid.<sup>4</sup> Haya de la Torre thus defined his party as a Latin America-wide political organization fighting against imperialism and its auxiliaries, the Latin American governing classes. As the Latin American Antiimperialist Revolutionary Party (another one of its titles), Apra sought to organize a united front of the manual and intellectual workers to defend their countries' sovereignty.<sup>5</sup> For this purpose both "maximum" and "minimum" programs were proposed, the first to be applied to Latin America in general and the second to be developed according to the needs of every individual country.

The maximum program included five fundamental principles: (1) the checking and control of foreign capital and resistance to Yankee imperialism, (2) the internationalization of the Panama Canal, (3) the political and economic unity of the Latin American nations, (4) nationalization of land and industry, (5) solidarity of all oppressed people and classes. Except for the proposal to internationalize the Panama Canal, the program offered nothing particularly new. But in proposing the formation of an international American movement to fight United States imperialism and its allies for the benefit of the middle class, the workers and the peasants, it enlarged the dimensions of that struggle.

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<sup>4</sup>Haya de la Torre, *Por la emancipación*, p. 126.

<sup>5</sup>Haya de la Torre, *Teoría política*, pp. 23-24.

It may be justifiably argued that the Apristas' concentration on the eradication of United States imperialism would only solve part of the problem since other outside powers, principally England, also had extensive interests in Latin America, and, in fact, the English interest was predominant in countries such as Argentina. The Apristas, however, believed that in the continuing struggle for economic control of Latin America United States imperialism was winning and that it would eventually replace the influence of all other foreign investors. For example, while in 1913 British and United States investments in Peru had been \$133,000,000 and \$35,000,000 respectively, by 1929 they amounted to \$140,000,000 and \$150,000,000.<sup>6</sup> There were still other considerations explaining the Apristas' attitude toward United States investments. European and especially British interests had invaded Peru and other Latin American nations in the early part of the nineteenth century, while the United States had undertaken its economic expansion only recently and under the shadow of the incident with Colombia over Panama and other imperialist ventures in the Caribbean. In addition, European interests were said to be industrially and geographically diversified, while the United States concentrated its investments in a few--but important--sectors. Thus in Peru the United States invested heavily in fewer than a dozen concerns, but they consisted of such obvious giants as the International Petroleum Co., controlling 70% of Peruvian oil; the Cerro de Pasco Corporation; W. R. Grace & Co., with huge land, textile and transportation interests; the National City Bank of New York; International Telephone and Telegraph, and so forth. While many of the firms in which European capital was

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<sup>6</sup>J. F. Hearnro, The struggle for South America (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), p. 54.



invested were broadly incorporated, with stock available to any buyer, most of the United States interests consisted of wholly-owned subsidiaries of United States corporations, directed from the home offices. This resulted in an impersonal relationship where Peru contributed only land, other natural resources, and often labor.<sup>7</sup>

Anxiety over an impending economic and political domination by the United States, fueled by this country's continuing arrogant foreign policy and propaganda from the threatened European interest,<sup>8</sup> had given rise to a nationalist reaction in Peru even in the early part of the twentieth century. It was supported by elements of all social classes, whether out of true nationalism or personal self-interest. It adopted the theme Peru para los Peruanos and fought Leguía's courting of United States capitalists. From this same movement emerged Sánchez Cerro's nationalism and Haya de la Torre's anti-imperialism and, though it is a fact that Apra was the first organized party in Peru with the principal objective of combating Yankee imperialism, its desire to monopolize credit for this struggle is pretentious.

The Apristas saw two major enemies for Latin America--Yankee imperialism and its supposed allies, the Latin American governing classes--and proposed a two-fold plan to combat them. The first step consisted of the formation in each country of an "anti-imperialist state" based on the productive sectors of society--workers, peasants,

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>8</sup>Inter-Am. Digest, September 20, 1930, CRI, 324. A not very recent interview with Leguía is reproduced in which the former president told a U.S. correspondent that the anti-U.S. propaganda in Latin America was not "spontaneous" but was inspired and financed by business rivals in other parts of the world who "have jealousy and resentment of poor growing commercial relations with these republics down here below the equator."

the rural and urban middle class, and the intellectuals. Though it was not specified how this coalition was to come to power, it can be assumed that either the ballot or the bullet would have been acceptable--revolution being considered sometimes necessary by Haya de la Torre.<sup>9</sup> The second step called for the revival of the Bolivarian concept of Latin American unity.

In the anti-imperialist state power would be concentrated in the hands of the middle class, of which the intellectuals are members,<sup>10</sup> because the Apristas maintained that the peasants and the workers lacked the preparation, the organized numbers and the class consciousness to rule.<sup>11</sup> In addition, since the imperialists had temporarily raised their standard of living, the peasants and the workers would not recognize the threat until a later time. The middle class, on the other hand, had experienced the most immediate harm from foreign capital because the small proprietor (manufacturer, miner, or farmer), the intellectual and the white-collar worker had been submerged and often absorbed by the power of the foreign concerns.<sup>12</sup> Thus, it seems that the Apristas were urging the lower classes to offer their help even though they were not yet capable of recognizing the logic of the Aprista plan. It was hoped that they would respond favorably to the plan on the mere promise that eventually their interests would be enhanced by the "new state."

<sup>9</sup>Haya de la Torre, Por la emancipación, p. 124.

<sup>10</sup>Haya de la Torre, Antimperialismo, pp. 69-70.

<sup>11</sup>Haya de la Torre, "La independencia económica de la América Latina," Repertorio Americano, XXIII (August 1, 1931), 69-70.

<sup>12</sup>Haya de la Torre, Antimperialismo, pp. 64-67.

Though the evil of imperialism was recognized, the "new state" would not immediately suppress it. Claiming to depart from the Leninist teachings, the Apristas insisted that imperialism was not the last but the first step of capitalism in the developing countries. They argued that in order to modernize the economic structure and weaken the established governing groups whose power rested on the possession and exploitation of land, foreign capital would be needed. Such capital would speed industrialization and would create new and strengthen existing power groups alien to the traditional forces and, therefore, ready to challenge them for political control. This foreign capital, however, was not to be courted nor to be given special privileges but was to submit to controls, a condition which Apristas assumed would be accepted because capital needed investment areas more badly than developing countries needed capital. The "anti-imperialist state" would control both the production and the distribution of wealth, and at the same time would undertake a progressive nationalization of the sources of wealth; and it would act as an educator of the peasants and workers to make them ready to assume some governmental responsibility when "the system which determines the existence of imperialism disappears."<sup>13</sup>

Having removed the traditional ruling classes from power and placed some controls on foreign capital, the Apristas would then implement the second part of their plan--the union of all Latin American countries--and would call on the students to spearhead such a movement, for they, better than anyone else, realized its necessity.<sup>14</sup> Through

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<sup>13</sup>Haya de la Torre, "La independencia económica...", Repertorio Americano, XXIII, 70.

<sup>14</sup>Haya de la Torre, "Latin America's student revolution," Living Age, CCCXXI (October 15, 1926), 106.

such confederation foreign capital would be obliged to submit to even stricter controls. Once again, two obstacles were envisioned--United States imperialism and the residual influence of the traditional governing classes. To overcome these obstacles, they proposed an indoctrination campaign that would bring Latin Americans to the realization that their existing intereconomic disputes were often created and certainly encouraged by the imperialists, to whose advantage it was to foment such disunity. Latin Americans would also need to reject the "foolish chauvinism" promoted by the ruling classes, the associates of foreign capital, for their own personal profit.<sup>15</sup> Actually, the Apristas' proposed plan for unity had been widely sought and discussed in the nineteenth century but was abandoned as impractical. Latin Americans were moving toward what seemed a more realistic goal of regional unity.<sup>16</sup>

To reduce all of Latin America's problems, as the Apristas attempted to do, to the evil machinations of imperialism and its allies was an oversimplification and a misinterpretation of Latin American history. Why this interpretation was advanced in light of numerous exceptions, such as Ecuador's more overt anxiety over Peruvian imperialism than United States investments, is a matter of speculation. One possible explanation is that the Aprista party with branches in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, and Uruguay, in attempting to create its own "International" in Latin America, sought to establish an effective ideological common denominator with which Latin Americans could easily identify. The Aprista aims, in fact, were widely lauded, and they

<sup>15</sup> Haya de la Torre, "Nuestro programa social y político," *Revista Aprista*, XIII (November 13, 1926), 266.

<sup>16</sup> See Monson's Struggle for South America.

encouraged the establishment of ideologically related political parties from Cuba to Paraguay. The program, however, never reached even the possibility of success.

The Apristas' attacks on imperialism and the aristocratic ruling classes earned them the "communist" label which was to remain with them for many years. Actually Haya de la Torre, if ever connected at all, definitely broke with the Communists in February, 1927, when he refused to join the Third International following its demand that he change the middle-class orientation of his party. Haya de la Torre had apparently concluded that economically, politically and socially the Communists lacked a satisfactory plan to solve the problems of Latin America. Economically, the Communists wanted to destroy capitalism, which--according to the Apristas--would work against the best interests of Latin America, at least in the short run. Politically, the Communists lacked the necessary forces to carry out the struggle against imperialism, for their reliance on the proletariat to obtain power in an essentially agrarian region was unrealistic. In addition, theirs was an international party whose policies were directed and controlled by Moscow, and the Apristas argued that Moscow did not know what Latin America needed. Socially, a workers' party by itself could not become a stable basis for a nation unless it were united to the peasants and to the middle class.<sup>17</sup>

Apra's refusal to join the Third International drew a scathing attack from the Latin American communists. One of them, the Cuban Antonio Mella, accused Haya de la Torre of being an opportunist and his

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<sup>17</sup> Haya de la Torre, *El imperialismo, masivo*.

party of being paid by reactionaries in various governments in order to fool the masses; he called the Apristas divisionists and "enemies of the proletariat and of the revolutionary organizations under them."<sup>18</sup> More serious than this and similar attacks, however, was the division which the incident caused between Haya de la Torre and José Carlos Mariátegui. Their relationship, though never close, had guaranteed a degree of relative unity among Peruvian intellectuals. It had also assured the continuation of the student-operated Popular Universities which had been created by Haya de la Torre in 1920 to educate the workers and to provide ties between them and the students. Their directorship was assumed by Mariátegui when Haya de la Torre was exiled in 1923. But following its rupture with Apra in 1927, the Third International urged Mariátegui to form a political organization to rival the Aprista, which had been forming cells in Peru since 1926. The Peruvian Marxist and seven of his followers in fact founded the Socialist party in response to this plea, but it still was not what the International wanted. The latter objected to the name "Socialist" used by the new party and also to its ideological orientation, which tried to appeal simultaneously to the workers, the peasants and the lower bourgeoisie. Mariátegui, therefore, was pressured to conform more closely with international communist ideology. For three years he resisted the pressures, and in 1930 was on his way to Buenos Aires to defend his position at an international meeting of Communist parties when he died. Some of his followers then decided to conform to the International's directives and on May 20, 1930, founded the Communist

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<sup>18</sup>Julio Antonio Mella, *La lucha revolucionaria contra el imperialismo* (Mexico D.F.: n.p.b., 1926), p. 27.

party. Others remained with the Socialist party and a third, smaller group eventually joined the Aprista party.<sup>19</sup>

Though Mariátegui had resisted some of the communist pressures and in some cases had recognized the unreasonableness of the International's demands--such as a proposed plan of creating a Quechua and Aymara republic--his faith in the goals of international Communism was never really shaken. Therefore, he had become increasingly critical of the course taken by Apra, especially its refusal to join the International, feeling that Apra had served to weaken the solidarity of the left. Bickering ensued between Mariátegui and Haya de la Torre, and it led to an open break in 1928 when, under Aprista auspices, the Partido Femenil Libertador was established in Peru. The aims of the new party were the spreading of Aprista teachings and preparing the basis for Haya de la Torre's candidacy in the 1939 presidential election. Mariátegui criticized Apra for abandoning its original label as an "alliance" to assume the characteristics of a political party. He condemned the type of "old style" political literature used by the party, its tendency to employ the "bluff" and the "lie," and its complete abandonment of the term "socialism." He also expressed the fear that the whole leftist movement (his included) would be destroyed if it became involved in the "vulgar electoral excitement."<sup>20</sup> This fear, in fact, was well founded, for Leguía would not have permitted the electoral participation of a party which tried to appeal for support to the same group--the middle class--upon which rested much of his power. Haya de la Torre was well aware of this, but he did not share Mariátegui's concern that the

<sup>19</sup>Basadre, IX, 4213-15.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 4208-10.

whole leftist movement would be suppressed; indeed he appears to have been frankly seeking a confrontation with the Leguía regime which, though bloody, would shake it and hopefully overthrow it. Thus, he responded to Mariátegui's attacks by accusing him of being caught up in old European questions, of having been influenced by pseudo-revolutionaries, and of not being actively involved in the struggles of the workers. Finally he promised that even without using the word "socialism" his party would revolutionize Peru.<sup>21</sup>

Though Leguía's overthrow was not accomplished in 1929, it occurred in 1930. Apristas from Europe and the Americas then began to return to their native country and worked to establish Haya de la Torre as one of the most powerful and popular of the Peruvian politicians.<sup>22</sup> This flow was temporarily slowed and reversed by Sánchez Cerro during his first regime, and the party's propaganda, membership drives and organization suffered until the Sánchez Ocampo junta took power and urged all parties to prepare for the upcoming general election.

Between May and June, 1931, Aprista congresses met in various departments to draw up a party platform. On July 12th Haya de la Torre, the party's announced presidential candidate, landed in Talara, in northern Peru, and launched a campaign tour which took him first to Trujillo and finally to Lima on August 15th where he opened the first Aprista National Congress. This congress, the climax of provincial, departmental, and regional congresses, adopted the Plan de Acción Inmediato o Programa Mínimo which was to serve as the party's platform in the coming election. It was a detailed plan, most remarkable for

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<sup>21</sup> ibid.

<sup>22</sup> ibid., September 12, 1930, p. 12.



its small number of truly revolutionary pledges.

Politically, the Aprista platform promised federalism, with the nation to be divided according to a regional economic criterion and with local authorities to be guaranteed specific self-governing rights.<sup>23</sup> It also offered: separation of church and state, the secret vote, the granting of full rights to women,<sup>24</sup> a new general census, and the establishment of a department of statistics. In public administration it pledged to set standards for government employees and to administer severe penalties to those who misused the public trust, and it asked for the establishment of a civil service based on the merit system. In economic and financial matters it promised governmental involvement to improve every aspect of production through the application of scientific methods. It also offered: a reform of the legislation governing taxation, with a tendency to abolish indirect taxes which most affected the small businessmen and the most essential products; taxation of luxury articles and unused capital; regulation of rents; development of national industries with the establishment of higher tariffs; anti-trust legislation; cancellation of monopolies threatening national sovereignty; search for less onerous conditions on the payment of the foreign debt; encouragement of cooperatives; nationalization of the means of transportation; creation of a national bank with industrial, mining

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<sup>23</sup>The platform is contained in Haya de la Torre's Política Aprista, pp. 8-29.

<sup>24</sup>The promise regarding the granting of full rights to women is ambiguous. As discovered later in the constitutional debates (see Diario del Congreso, Dec. 1930, Jan. 1931), the Apristas limited the rights to those women who worked, were educated, or were going to school, thus feeling that the church's influence on the woman could be checked. They finally supported a motion giving women the vote in local elections only.

and agricultural branches which would give preferential treatment to the small national producer; and a balanced budget.

The Apristas believed that upon the institution of the latifundio rested the tragedy of the Indian and the failure of the emergence of a middle class. Thus, the platform pledged the expropriation of lands on the basis of size, absenteeism and productive use. The government would pay the owners a just sum and would see that the lands were used for the production of crops needed for the internal market. The government would also encourage the creation of collectives and cooperatives and would offer technical and economic support. It would regulate contracts between the landowner and the tenants; it would levy heavy taxes on uncultivated lands; and it would undertake irrigation projects.

In dealing specifically with the question of the Indian, the Apristas pledged to work toward his full incorporation in the life of the nation. The program thus pledged the protection of Indian small property, encouragement of small indigenous industries, the education of the native in his own language as well as in Spanish, and a campaign against the abuses of alcohol and cocaine.

For the improvement of working conditions the programa mínimo offered to establish the eight-hour day in all possible businesses; to grant from seven to fifteen days of yearly paid vacation; a six-hour day for workers under sixteen; a seven-hour work load for night workers and for those working in the sub soil; the establishment of a minimum wage according to the conditions of each region, the wage being set by commissions in which the state, the worker and the employer would be represented; a standard of pensions guaranteeing the worker a comfortable retirement; and wage equality between men and women.

In education, a revision of the school system from kindergarden to the university was promised. The platform committed the Apristas to: a better economic standard for teachers, the creation in each region of advanced teaching institutions as needed, the establishment of centers of secondary agricultural courses, the preservation of the autonomy of the universities and superior technical schools, and the maintenance of the principles of the Reforma Universitaria.

On the question of immigration, the program vowed to prohibit foreign immigration to the coast and to the sierra. Since no specific mention was made of the source of immigration to be prohibited, it is assumed that immigrants from Latin America were also to be excluded. This stood not only contradicted the party's dream of Latin American cooperation and unity, but it also seemed to be condoning the strong nationalist sentiment then prevalent in the Lima press which Haya de la Torre had decried as detrimental to Latin American unity.

On mining, the platform promised the nationalization of the industry in the near future; it asked that a certain percentage of the profits of the mining enterprises be used for the creation of new national industries, and it offered to study the feasibility of establishing a national refinery in order to diminish the price of products derived from petroleum. The platform also vowed to implement legislation fixing a reasonable length of time for the exploitation of a specific mining concession and promised to oblige companies generating electric power for mining uses to sell a percentage of that generated power.

Finally, the military establishment received the attention of the Apristas. They recognized the armed forces as an institution whose

essential purpose was to defend the honor and security of the nation and to ensure the rule of law. But they were also to be used to provide education and training for the Indian, and as an instrument for the building of roads and railroads, the uncovering of new sources of wealth, and other similar economically beneficial enterprises.

The programa mínimo was hardly revolutionary. A party platform in which it is deemed necessary to include promises of a balanced budget and of continued payment--even if at a reduced level--on the foreign debt can hardly be considered such. The program was not very innovative. It expressed some of the regional desires for local autonomy which had been a common issue between Lima and the provinces for some time and which were theoretically accepted by all the other major candidates. The party also offered nationalist policies which its major political opponent generally supported and which had become part of the everyday political jargon.<sup>25</sup> Nor were its promises to the Indian and labor either new or revolutionary. Sánchez Cerro had presented almost similar projects and later was to turn some of them into law. Many of the provisions in the program, such as those relating to land reform, small mineowners, and financial assistance to small business, were aimed quite clearly at enhancing the position of the middle class. But they did not endanger the power of foreign interests and the economic and social influence of the traditional ruling classes, at least not in the short run. The danger for those two groups was not present so much in the proposed program as it was in the speeches and words uttered by the Aprista leaders. Similarly, the often mentioned fear that the Apristas were going to destroy the military had been part

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<sup>25</sup>See general press of the period, but especially El Comercio, Mundial, Revista Semanal and La Crónica.

of Aprista rhetoric and not of its political program. Haya de la Torre repeatedly stressed the fact during the campaign that even though the party objected to the political involvement of the armed forces it could not be opposed to them because they were made up principally of elements from the classes upon which Apra sought to base its power.<sup>26</sup> (Though Haya de la Torre promised to get the military out of politics, he had attempted to obtain military backing in his 1929 political campaign against Leguía,<sup>27</sup> and he was to do so again later in the numerous attempts to overthrow Sánchez Cerro.)<sup>28</sup>

In a major speech on August 23, 1931, Haya de la Torre presented the programa minimo to a large gathering of Apristas. Like the program itself, he stressed the need of striving toward a technical and scientific organization of the state in which "the technician and the expert direct governmental activities...."<sup>29</sup> The presentation had as its leitmotif Peru's need to industrialize, to rationalize its economy, to establish economic order and planning. Indeed it sounded rather like a neo-positivist exaltation of "progress." In addition, in its numerous quotations--technical and otherwise--from European experts, the speech seemed to emphasize the Apristas' eclectic reliance on European experiences. Yet it also contained Haya de la Torre's call for a mystical dedication of all his supporters to the aims of the party and a veiled

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<sup>26</sup>Haya de la Torre, El plan del Aprismo. Programa de gobierno del Partido Aprista Peruano (Lima: Editorial Libertad, 1933), pp. 23-25.

<sup>27</sup>Basadre, IX, 4208.

<sup>28</sup>See Chapters V and VI.

<sup>29</sup>Haya de la Torre, Política Aprista, p. 56.

threat that violence would be used if "the will of the majority" were not respected.<sup>30</sup>

### Sánchez Cerro's party and program

Upon his return to Peru in July, 1931, Sánchez Cerro found that he was faced with the urgent need of shaping his forces into a tight political instrument if he was to wage an effective struggle against the already well organized Apristas. His protracted struggle with the junta over the question of his return to Peru had apparently won him additional popular sympathy, while his promise of future good behavior had gone far to assuage fears within the military establishment and had enabled him to re-establish close ties with some of its elements.<sup>31</sup> His only coordinated political support, however, consisted of a Comité Nacionalista Pro-Elección Sánchez Cerro founded in February, 1931, numerous clubs originally created to lobby for his return, and the small Partido Social Nacionalista in Ancash which had endorsed his candidacy.<sup>32</sup> These groups operated independently and at the local level only. Following the advice of close friends, including Luis Antonio Eguiguren, Sánchez Cerro decided that rather than consume valuable time in creating a new party he would assume the leadership of the Partido Unión Revolucionaria (U.R.) which represented a conglomeration of interests including Civilistas, Liberals, Democrats,

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<sup>30</sup>Haya de la Torre, Programa de gobierno, pp. 10-37.

<sup>31</sup>Eguiguren, p. 37.

<sup>32</sup>El Comercio, June 23, 1931, p. 2.

Social Nationalists and independents.<sup>33</sup> Some of the leaders of the party, like Eguiguren, were supporters of Sánchez Cerro, and they handed him the structure of a political alliance which probably could not be regrouped under another party label.<sup>34</sup> Though it had previously lacked a clear philosophy and structure, under Sánchez Cerro's leadership the party adopted the slogan "El Peru sobre todo" and formed a central committee which represented the union of old Civilistas such as José Manuel García Roldán, Clemente J. Revilla, and Eduardo Lanatta, and young right-wing nationalists such as Alfredo Herrera, Luis A. Flores, and Carlos Suyan Alvarez, who in the 1920's had fought the leftists for control of the students' organizations at San Marcos and had plotted against the Oncenio.

It was nevertheless apparent that the only element which held the U.R. together at the national level was Sánchez Cerro himself. Unity was even more tenuous at the local level where the party tended to reflect special interests and lacked strong discipline. Thus, when the party's national committee published its list of candidates selected to run for the Assembly in departmental elections, many were not received kindly and some were actively opposed by the local organizations. In addition, some avowed members of the party and active supporters of Sánchez Cerro, even including Eguiguren, ran as independents with their own organization, membership cards and flags.<sup>35</sup> Such a situation raised the very real possibility that the party would not obtain a parliamentary majority and would lose the presidency should the final choice be

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<sup>33</sup>Eguiguren, p. 39.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 42-43.

made by the Assembly. In the end, Sánchez Cerro did obtain the needed popular majority and won the presidency, but he had to depend on smaller political parties, such as the Social Nacionalista, and on independent members in order to obtain a majority in the Assembly.

In order to strengthen his party's organization and test his popularity at the same time, Sánchez Cerro undertook a series of campaign trips especially in the central and southern regions of Peru. The first such trip took him to Arequipa, Puno, Cuzco, Mollendo and Ica, whence--still afflicted by a case of food poisoning contracted in Puno--he flew to Lima. The tour demonstrated both how determined was his opposition and how widespread his support. All along the route violence and slander accompanied his entourage. The most serious incident erupted in Cuzco, where both Communists and Apristas had prepared demonstrations against Sánchez Cerro and had already engaged in various clashes with his supporters. When on August 9th someone threw a beer on Sánchez Cerro, a gunshot was fired nearby and cries of "death to Sánchez Cerro" erupted during a parade, it required quick police action to stop the Sánchez Cerristas from storming both the Aprista and the Communist headquarters. But it was illness forcing the "hero of Arequipa" to curtail his campaigning and the jailing of Aprista and Communist leaders which helped re-establish a tenuous peace in the city.<sup>36</sup>

The support which Sánchez Cerro enjoyed among elements of all social classes was also clearly evident in the course of his campaign

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<sup>36</sup>See El Peru, August, 1937.



trip through southern Peru,<sup>37</sup> but it was not limited to that region. The enthusiasm expressed by the wealthier groups was presumably determined by their fear of the social unrest which Apra was exploiting and by Sánchez Cerro's espousal of a strong law-and-order and anti-Aprista stand. On the other hand, the lower classes seemed to be impressed above all by Sánchez Cerro's aura as the military hero who had led the revolution of Arequipa. In announcing the formation of pro-Sánchez Cerro clubs, for example, market vendors, newspaper carriers and similar groups always mentioned the "hero of Arequipa's" role in the 1930 revolution. But they also seemed to appreciate a number of his other characteristics, such as his renowned physical courage, his exploits with the ladies, and his photo features.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps for the same reasons Sánchez Cerro was able to stir what appeared to be an unprecedented interest in politics among the Peruvian women. Their contribution to the campaign was considerable even though they were not allowed to vote. They too created clubs in support of the "hero of Arequipa," actively worked for him, and were effectively used in parades and in protest marches. This role was apparent when the Sanchez Ocampo junta attempted to enforce the state of siege in the Lima-Calleo area on the day of Sánchez Cerro's return to Peru, for it found itself in the position of having to display great force to control wildering demonstrations which were led mainly by women.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Such success was widely reported in El Peru. Because this newspaper was adamantly opposed to Sánchez Cerro, it can hardly be suspected of exaggerating the extent of his support. Therefore, the author has heavily relied on its detailed coverage of the southern trip.

<sup>38</sup>El Comercio, June 29, 1931, pp. 4-6. Similar news appeared in July, August, and September.

<sup>39</sup>See El Comercio and El Peru for the first week of July, 1931.

While Sánchez Cerro was campaigning in the south, his party's platform was published in Lima. Its open intent was to present the "hero of Arequipa" as working toward the establishment of an exalted patriotism and national pride, as contrasted with Apra's alleged internationalism and disregard of national interests. Apra was rebuked for its attacks on the nationalist sentiments of the individual Latin American countries and was even falsely accused of membership in the Communist International.<sup>40</sup> In its concrete proposals, however, the platform was in many respects remarkably similar to the Apristas' "minimum program"

In dealing with administrative and political questions, the program recognized the need to decentralize the ruling of the country by providing more autonomy to every branch of government down to and including the municipalities. It also promised to moralize the nation's administrative structure and to base it not on the participation of one single group or party but rather on the cooperation of all national elements. It supported complete freedom of the press, expression and association--though within the limits established by the laws and by "truth"--and it promised complete electoral freedom as well. In the latter connection it expressed support for the election of representatives on a departmental rather than a provincial basis as a way of weakening the power of the caciques.<sup>41</sup>

In the social and economic field the Sánchez Cerrista program held that the central duty of the state was to distribute the nation's

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<sup>40</sup> See Haya de la Torre's trial in Chapter VI for more details.

<sup>41</sup> El Comercio, August 8, 1931, p. 6. The Sánchez Cerrista platform was published on this date in this newspaper.

wealth as justly as possible and to find a balance between the stimulation of capital for the development of the nation's riches on the one hand and the welfare of individual Peruvians on the other. Thus, a work code had to be developed to guarantee and safeguard the rights of the workers and to protect them in case of injury. To insure this protection, a Tribunal was to be created to guarantee enforcement of the labor laws. The program also promised to establish social security for sickness, accident, old age, unemployment and death with contributions from the state, the employer and the employee. In addition it vowed to stimulate the proletariat's "spirit of association" by encouraging the formation of corporations and unions.

The program viewed the country's agricultural problems as stemming from the poor distribution of land; from the inadequacy of credit resources, and from the lack of technical know how. It held that every Peruvian who wanted one was entitled to a plot of land but did not envision the expropriation of latifundios under either extensive or intensive cultivation but only of those which were left uncultivated. Indeed it was stated that Peru had enough currently unused territory to satisfy the needs of the landless. In each of this territory cultivation was not possible, but elsewhere the program pledged extensive irrigation projects. The reclaimed territory and the unused land expropriated from the latifundios were to be made available to all Peruvians, together with agricultural schools, credit, cooperatives, and technical assistance. In addition, laws would be passed to protect the small farmer from being taken over by large haciendas, and the state would both encourage production and guarantee the farmer a safe return by offering to buy any surplus he might have. All the surplus

food bought would be stored in granaries to be released only when a rise in price threatened. It was hoped that through such measures a class of small farmers would be created, that the consumers would equally benefit through stable prices and a lower cost of living, and that the nation would become more self-sufficient.<sup>42</sup>

The platform made the cause of the Indian its own. Since it saw the problem as insoluble until the attitudes of the white man and mestizo toward the Indian were changed, it called upon all citizens to view their neighbor as a Peruvian rather than as a member of a particular race. It recognized, however, that the government could not remain idle and wait for this spiritual transformation before granting aid to the Indian. Thus, it vowed to provide the Indian with productive agricultural lands, to return those previously usurped from Indian communities, to encourage agricultural cooperatives among Indian communities and independent small farmers, and to help the Indian increase the yield of his land by introducing the most modern technology and agricultural methods. In conjunction with such measures the program pledged to spur and protect small Indian industries, especially those dealing in exportable goods; to create special agricultural and industrial schools for the Indian population; to initiate a program of "traveling schools"; and to grant ample assistance to the development of indigenous cultural committees. Finally, the respective government ministries were to be ordered to add agencies to deal especially with the questions of Indian labor, education and development.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.; La Prensa, July 11, 1931, pp. 1, 5. Sánchez Cerro's economic program was first given in an interview he granted to La Prensa on this day and was later reprinted by El Comercio with the rest of the platform.

<sup>43</sup>El Comercio, August 8, 1931, p. 6.

Sánchez Cerro's economic views as expressed in the program were essentially in line with the conventional economic philosophy of the day. He saw political instability, the national debt incurred during the Oncenio, and the decline in exports as the three principal factors affecting the economic health of the nation. The solution to the first problem seemed to be at hand with the upcoming presidential election, but the strictly economic and financial factors could not be so readily resolved. Whatever any candidate proposed, the solution to Peru's economic problem was closely connected with the improvement of the world-wide situation. As all the other candidates, however, Sánchez Cerro offered a number of measures to alleviate the economic difficulties. He proposed the creation of a realistic balanced budget as a means of stabilizing the currency; any further cuts to be made in the budget, however, were to come from services--not from salaries. He promised to lower the prices of consumer goods and to make the tax system more just so that those in the higher income bracket would contribute more. He also proposed government controls on capital going out of the country, the creation of a country-wide banking organization to make credit readily available to regional economic interests, the establishment of a Miners' Bank to help small miners increase their production and to protect them from absorption by larger enterprises, and a revision of Peru's tariff system.<sup>44</sup>

Sánchez Cerro declared himself opposed in principle to protectionism. This was a logical position since Peru depended so much on exports. However, since at that time Peru did not have the economic

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<sup>44</sup>The whole section on Sánchez Cerro's economic program was taken from: La Prensa, July 11, 1931, and El Comercio, August 8, 1931.

power to influence any change in world trade policy, Sánchez Cerro stated that his government would maintain the country's protective barriers and at the same time would work toward making the nation more self-sufficient. Such self-sufficiency was to be achieved first in agriculture; thus, the nation had to end its heavy reliance on cotton and sugar and strive instead for agricultural diversification by promoting production increases in such crops as wheat. The desired dividends from this policy would be a drastic diminution in the volume of imports and the achievement of self-sufficiency in the production of critical nutritional goods.

In connection with international trade, Sánchez Cerro also proposed the strengthening of Peru's merchant marine in order to guarantee the movement of the nation's goods. Thus, he pledged to continue the same policy toward the Compañía Peruana de Vapores (the principal national shipping concern) which he had initiated during his first regime. Since the Compañía was in disarray and needed capital to pay its debts and modernize, the government had agreed to turn over all the stocks it owned in the firm as payment of the debt owed to the Compañía by the nation itself. Those stocks could in turn be sold to acquire the capital needed. Also, in the field of transportation policy Sánchez Cerro vowed to build roads, to improve fluvial traffic, and in general to integrate the economies of the various regions.

Sánchez Cerro's economic policy was clearly intended to be nationalistic. In the same interview with La Prensa he also urged the nationalization of all public service enterprises; the establishment of governmental controls over all foreign investments; a revision of the laws dealing with petroleum concessions; in order to tighten governmental

supervision of production and to tax the industry more adequately; regulation of the credit and insurance operations of foreign companies; the employment of an 80% Peruvian labor force in all foreign-owned enterprises; and prohibition of payment of contracts in foreign currency.

Sánchez Cerro also pledged increased assistance to education. More schools at all levels were promised; commercial and industrial schools were to receive increasing attention in order to make secondary education a source of technical training as well as a preparation for university education, and special revenues were to be created to make educational financing independent from unwarranted political and budgetary considerations. In addition, financial and ideological autonomy was promised to the universities in conjunction with fellowships and travel grants for deserving students seeking further specialization, and the establishment of special seminars for the study of national problems.<sup>45</sup>

Regarding the armed forces, Sánchez Cerro had already stressed in a letter from Paris their role as the defender of the constitution and of the popular will but had denied them any right to the open profession of political views.<sup>46</sup> The platform reiterated this position and emphasized the need to professionalize the armed forces by providing them with the most modern educational methods and making promotions dependent on merit rather than political favoritism. Not forgetting the navy's and air force's early opposition to him, Sánchez Cerro

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<sup>45</sup>El Comercio, August 22, 1931, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup>Luis Humberto Delgado, Meditaciones Peruanas (n.p.: Editores Ariel, 1964), p. 29.

offered special attention to both of them. To the navy he pledged enough funds, within the possibilities of the budget, to modernize its equipment, to send its young officers to be trained in highly advanced foreign academies, to improve the level of education in the naval academy, and to create a naval base at Callao. The air force was to be granted more recognition as an essential instrument of communication within the country and was to receive funds for new equipment and for the building of more air bases.<sup>47</sup>

The platform foreshadowed Sánchez Cerro's future course in foreign relations when it stated that Peru must recapture its pride in international affairs and flatly condemned all past political, diplomatic, financial and administrative concessions to foreign powers. It emphasized the need to safeguard Peruvian borders and abandon the past policies of territorial dismemberment. It did add, however, that all disputes would be submitted to arbitration.<sup>48</sup>

The Sánchez Cerro program was not prepared in the seemingly orderly and logical fashion of the Aprista platform, nor was it presented with the same fanfare. But in dealing with the Indian, the social question, foreign capital, economic matters and education, the two programs were in fact quite similar. One important difference, however, was that while Sánchez Cerro took a strong nationalist stand on Peru's territorial disputes with other Latin American nations, the Apristas did not. This difference was to be repeatedly emphasized and successfully exploited by Sánchez Cerro.

<sup>47</sup>*El Comercio*, August 22, 1931, p. 7.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.



Though the Aprista and Sánchez Cerro platforms were not radically different in themselves, there was a significant difference in the emphasis which the two groups placed on their respective programs. The Apristas, though depending heavily on Haya de la Torre's personal popularity, publicized the program--and the campaign generally--as a common party effort, continuously stressed the virtues of their platform, and effectively propagandized its merits. Sánchez Cerro, on the other hand, paid little attention to his platform as such. He rarely referred to it, and his organization presented it to the public in a rather confused and perfunctory manner. Consequently, even some of Sánchez Cerro's contemporaries believed that he had no real program at all beyond the old Manifesto of Arequipa.<sup>49</sup> It would seem, in fact, that Sánchez Cerro believed he was going to win not as the result of any program but because of the qualities of his personality and past exploits and because of the fears which Apra and the social disorders of the day had stirred.<sup>50</sup>

On August 21st, Sánchez Cerro returned to Lima from his southern tour to participate in the celebration of the first anniversary of the Revolution of Arequipa. The Unión Revolucionaria organized similar events throughout the country, for much of its candidate's support derived from his role in that event. Except for Aprista organs, in fact, even the hostile press felt obliged to commend Sánchez Cerro for

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<sup>49</sup>See The New York Times, The Times (London), passim.

<sup>50</sup>For the different approach to the respective Aprista and Sánchez Cerro platforms, see the Aprista press (La Tribuna and Argos) and the numerous Aprista pamphlets written during the campaign, and the Lima press in general.

overthrowing what had often been called the worst dictatorship Peru had ever had.<sup>51</sup> In a speech at the August 22nd rally in Lima, Sánchez Cerro again stressed his role as the symbol of the August revolution and repeated his promise to fulfill the task of national purification and reconstruction which he had begun during his first regime. He proposed that his next government be one of harmony and that it take the shape of a national coalition in which no single group predominated. He continuously stressed the need for a nationalist revival, for only thus could the nation solve its political, social, and economic difficulties, defend the country's endangered democratic institutions, and meet the just demands of the working classes. Sánchez Cerro, however, did not contribute to internal peace when he added that his government would not tolerate either the Leguistas or the Apristas, charging that the first sought to weaken the concept of "nationality" and the second to destroy it.<sup>52</sup>

Sánchez Cerro's intransigence was matched by that of the Apristas, and thus Peru continued on a road which made the possibility of political coexistence ever more remote. An attempt was made by moderate forces to avert the clash of the two extremes and rally around a third presidential candidate. The story of this unsuccessful effort will now follow.

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<sup>51</sup>See, for example, *El Peru*, *Meridiano*, *Revista Semanal*. In spite of the event, the Aprista press continued to have only harsh words for the "base of Anquiza."

<sup>52</sup>*El Peru*, August 23, 1921, pp. 2, 4.

The moderate forces<sup>53</sup>

The leftist and rightist forces in Peru during the 1931 presidential election were generally well defined. However, when it comes to defining the moderate forces the task becomes complicated, because they were composed of numerous smaller parties which repeatedly made and broke coalitions, switched candidates, and displayed little ideological consistency. Their membership was drawn mainly from such traditional political parties as the Democratic, Liberal, and Social Democratic. However, according to Héro Quesada, many others of their initial members had belonged to the Civilista party. The Oncenio had been quite successful in destroying the Civilista party. After Leguía's overthrow attempts were made to resurrect it, but unsuccessfully. Without a party, yet desiring to recapture power, many of the old Civilista supporters concluded that their best chance for success rested in the political center.<sup>54</sup> This conclusion had been reached before the electoral campaign of 1931 really began. However, as election day approached the ineptness of the moderates' leadership, the growing strength of Sánchez Cerro, and the increasing fear of Aprista-sponsored social strife brought many of the moderates, including ex-Civilistas, into the ranks of the Sánchez Cerroistas.<sup>55</sup>

Generally, the moderate elements constituted narrow self-interested groups seemingly oblivious to the fundamental crisis which had gripped Peru. They felt that in 1931 they could revive the same coalitions

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<sup>53</sup>Most of the material for this section comes from the lime press of 1931.

<sup>54</sup>Héro Quesada, *El Perú*, Lima, pp. 58-59.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., *passim*.

which in the past had been so successful in balancing divergent interests and which for the most part had provided a mediocre, if stable, government. The examples which they most often wanted to emulate were the governments of 1895 and 1915, but they failed to realize that the circumstances and, more important, the leadership of 1895 could not be duplicated and that the 1915 coalition had been most responsible for the rise of Leguía.<sup>56</sup>

In 1931 the moderates' basic premise was that a large portion of the voters was undecided but would support a moderate presidential candidate if presented with a viable alternative. Working under this assumption, the leaders of the moderate forces believed that they had a strong bargaining position. In the very early stages of the campaign, in fact, they probably had sufficient influence to achieve a compromise, certainly with Sánchez Cerro and perhaps with Haya de la Torre, since both men had not yet returned to Peru and had not really tested their popularity. However, the moderates' chance to bring about an alliance proved unsuccessful when they demanded too great a voice in the directions of a coalition. Then, as the campaign unfolded and Sánchez Cerro and Haya de la Torre began to show increasing electoral strength, the moderates' influence quickly dwindled and their subsequent proposals for a coalition were flatly rejected. Still believing that they possessed the power to choose the next president, the leaders of the moderate forces began to work for a coalition of third parties independent of Apristas and Sánchez Cerristas. But jealousies, rivalries, and unwillingness to compromise greatly complicated the process of union.

<sup>56</sup> See Chapter I.

The first attempt at a coalition was made by an organization calling itself the Concentración Nacional, whose principal aim was the maintenance of political harmony in Peru by calling upon all political parties, municipalities, and labor unions to unite behind one candidate. The Concentración declared that it did not seek to impose a given political philosophy and had no preferred presidential candidate. Its aura of impartiality, however, was damaged when it was revealed that it had worked to organize support for the Sanchez Ocampo junta and that apparently it had the unofficial backing of Sanchez Ocampo himself.<sup>57</sup> The Concentración's ideal was further shattered when the influential municipalities of Lima and Arequipa, several labor unions,<sup>58</sup> and finally the two major presidential candidates denied it their support. Sánchez Cerro had originally expressed sympathy for the Concentración before his return to Peru, but when he learned that it had failed to intervene on his behalf during his visa struggle with the junta,<sup>59</sup> he withdrew his endorsement and spurned all further attempts at conciliation. Similarly, the Apristas rejected it on the grounds that it was a Civilista organization whose ruling committee was composed of landowners and allies of imperialism.<sup>60</sup>

Following this series of rejections the Concentración appealed to the numerous small political parties which had appeared on the political scene in the past few months, knowing that because of their weakness they could be attracted to a strong coalition. The Concentración's

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<sup>57</sup>Revista Semanal, May 21, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>El Peru, May 10, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>60</sup>La Tribuna, May 19, 1931, p. 3.

chances of success, however, were minimized when it invited only five of these parties to an organization meeting. This tactic had been adopted presumably to facilitate the work of union and on the assumption that once a plan of cooperation was drawn up it would then be presented to the other parties, but it gave an unfortunate appearance of exclusivism to the proceedings.<sup>61</sup>

Of the five parties that were invited to participate and proceeded to join the Concentración, one was the Democratic party, which was by now a mere shadow of the original, and lacking real political power was able to offer only the memories of Nicolás de Piórola. Another was the Liberal, originally reorganized to launch Sánchez Cerro's candidacy in early 1931 but no longer firmly committed to him, also relying on the name and prestige of its capable founder Augusto Durand. Its ideology was reactionary, opposing the secret vote and representation for minorities. The Unión Popular, which also joined, was no more than a Catholic organization, and Acción Republicana, the fourth party, was a recent creation representing professionals from a varied political background<sup>62</sup> and supported by the conservative Sociedad Nacional Agraria.<sup>63</sup> The fifth party was the Coalición Nacional of presidential candidate Arturo Osorio, whose brief participation in the Concentración is discussed below. These organizations were led generally by the same personalities who had directed the traditional third

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<sup>61</sup>El Peru, June 28, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., July 31, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, pp. 89-90.

force during the intra-Civilista struggle of the early twentieth century and who had been left without a real party and a program.

In spite of its scarce support, the Concentración called upon the declared presidential candidates to send four representatives each to discuss the coming election so that it could decide to whom its support should go. By July, 1931, however, it mattered little whom the Concentración would endorse. Sánchez Cerro answered by reminding it that the circumstances had so changed that his supporters and the people themselves wanted an open electoral struggle rather than subordinating their choice to the political judgment of the Concentración.<sup>64</sup> Haya de la Torre, through Apra's central committee, declined the invitation on the ground that the party's ideals were not subject to compromise, and like Sánchez Cerro he insisted that the people be given an open choice rather than be presented with a candidate already chosen by self-interested citizens.<sup>65</sup> The only candidate left was Arturo Osorio whose power rested on the Coalición Nacional and on the small Laborista party. His representatives, however, came armed with five resolutions modifying the structure of the Concentración itself. They were rebuked, and all further attempts by Osorio to assume a larger role in the leadership of the Concentración were thwarted. Finally, he also withdrew from the organization.<sup>66</sup>

The Concentración unrealistically assumed that in spite of its lack of public support and its rejection by all political candidates, it could still command enough power to dictate the outcome of the election. Its top leadership, represented by such old frustrated politicians

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<sup>64</sup>El Fin, August 2, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., August 8, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., August 19, 1931, p. 1.

as Amadeo Pierola who had been denied power since the glorious days of his father Nicolás de Pierola, still held to the belief that the Concentración was the entity which would spare the nation the dictatorship of Sánchez Cerro and the class struggle of the Apristas.<sup>67</sup> Yet it had been responsible for delaying the finding of an alternative candidate by its attempts to create a narrow leadership base and by its refusal to see that an old-style political accommodation was not possible. By August 31st the Concentración, for all practical purposes, had ceased to exist. The Acción Republicana and Liberal party formerly withdrew from it because of its inability to find a candidate, and some of its members switched to Sánchez Cerro in an attempt not to split the right.<sup>68</sup>

Though the Concentración disappeared, three of the parties which had supported it--Democratic, Liberal and Unión Popular--joined the Progresista in early September to create a less ambitious Alianza Nacional. The new coalition published a generally unremarkable program which vowed to seek a moral renovation of society; condemned the secret vote; attacked those groups preaching class struggle; and supported moderate social legislation such as the minimum wage, expropriation and redistribution of uncultivated latifundios and creation of a small landowning class. It also promised protection for small industries, suppression of monopolies, reduction of public expenditures, independence of the judiciary, and political and administrative decentralization.<sup>69</sup> With this mild program in hand, it set out to find a candidate.

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., August 24, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., August 28-31, 1931, passim.

<sup>69</sup>Patrin, September 13, 1931, p. 2.



As of September, 1931, there was already one moderate candidate, Arturo Osorio, in the field, but he had been unable to unite the moderate elements around him. He was an older figure, long active in politics, who was born at Chata in 1868 and had received a law degree in 1898 from the University of San Marcos. He became a member of the Constitutionalist party and represented it in Congress a number of times. In 1914 he had been one of the leaders of the plot which overthrew President Billinghurst and held the Interior Ministry in the junta which held power that year. In 1914 he was also elected Senator from Cuzco. He conspired against José Pardo, whom he had supported in 1915, and was Minister of Justice in Leguía's first cabinet. He resigned, spent a year as plenipotentiary in Italy, returned to Peru and soon after (1921) was exiled to Ecuador for opposing Leguía. In 1924 he led a military revolt against the government but was caught and imprisoned in San Lorenzo together with his wife, daughter, and two sons, one of whom died there. He remained in jail for six years until deported to the United States in 1929.<sup>70</sup> His credentials, therefore, as an enemy of Leguía--an important requirement for a candidate in the 1931 election--were more than solid, but he had little else going for him. He had been a participant in the political struggles of the early twentieth century and had made a number of errors. As a member of the Constitutionalist party he was viewed as anti-Democratic; as a conspirator against Pardo and original supporter of Leguía, he was not liked by segments of the old Civilista party, and as an enemy of Leguía he could not be supported by the leguistas. In addition, he had stirred little popular enthusiasm, and his most important claim to the

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<sup>70</sup>Basadre, IX, 4045.

presidency was the mere fact that he would provide an alternative to the extremism of both Sánchez Cerro and Haya de la Torre.

Osores repeatedly insisted that if another candidate won the necessary political support (i.e., as an alternative to the two major candidates), he would withdraw and endorse him.<sup>71</sup> Earlier in the campaign, however, he had seemed willing to make a deal with Haya de la Torre because he felt ideologically closer to him than to Sánchez Cerro. Like the Aprista leader, he considered the middle sectors to be the main hope for Peru and their economic plight the foremost challenge facing the country.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps because of this ideological orientation, Osores sent his representative Federico More to attempt to convince the Apristas that they could not win. More emphasized that they were frightening the well-to-do into the arms of Sánchez Cerro but that those same elements would likely vote for Osores. Haya de la Torre, however, was not going to be denied a chance at the presidency at a time when he was given a 50% chance of winning.<sup>73</sup> Osores still left himself open for a deal with the Apristas, even if it meant his own withdrawal, but nothing ever came of it.<sup>74</sup> Denied the endorsement first of the Concentración and later of the Alianza Nacional, rejected by the Apristas, supported by only two small parties and the forlorn hope that in the end the dormant moderate electorate would turn to him, Osores continued his campaign. He preached the need for economic

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<sup>71</sup>Mundici, July 17, 1931, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup>Revista Semanal, July 9, 1931, p. 29.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., September 3, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>74</sup>More, pp. 49-50.

decentralization and for the encouragement of foreign capital; called for integration of the Indian in national life through education, economic assistance, land ownership, and a series of special privileges;<sup>75</sup> but he never convinced a significant number of voters that he was a viable alternative.

When it became clear that Osorio was not the moderates' favorite candidate, trial balloons were sent up to test the strength of other moderates, including the Saramez Ocampo junta's ex-Foreign Minister Rafael Larco Herrera and General Oscar Benavides. But the response was far from enthusiastic. By the beginning of September, however, the name of José María de la Jara y Ureta, Peru's ambassador to Brasil and an early supporter of the Concentración, was increasingly being mentioned. A journalist who had written for El Tiempo and La Prensa, who had directed El País and had taught at the University of San Marcos, de la Jara y Ureta had been active in politics since the 1890's. He had been first a member of the Democratic party and an apologist for Nicolás de Piérola; later he had helped found the National Democratic party composed of young intellectuals from all political affiliations and headed by the Civilista José de la Riva Agüero, and finally he had opposed the Leguía regime, for which he suffered imprisonment in San Lorenzo. He seemed to be an ideal choice for the moderates. He was generally respected and admired, was intelligent, had the necessary political credentials, and--lacking vocal opponents within the traditional forces--he appeared to have the potential to become an effective rallying point for the supposedly large moderate forces. The fact that he did not have a program, that his popularity

<sup>75</sup>Revista Social, July 9, 1934, p. 22.

was untested, and that he would not be able to return to Peru to campaign did not seem to worry his supporters. Their strategy may well have been to deny an electoral majority to either of the leading candidates in the hope that Congress would select their choice, or that they would at least have an important voice in the selection of the next president.

The first political party to launch de la Jara y Ureta's nomination was the Decentralista party, which was especially strong in southern Peru. This party reflected the federalist sentiment in the south which had become especially vocal after the overthrow of the Onkenio. The party based its demand for decentralization on the economic neglect suffered by the provinces at the hands of the central government, and it described the existing relationship between Lima and the provinces as a colonial one in which the former was concerned mainly with the collection of taxes rather than with provincial economic development.<sup>76</sup> It also resented the fact that for the past few decades Lima had unduly supported and protected such coastal-based agricultural export crops as cotton and sugar at the expense of other agricultural enterprises, thus contributing to the uneven economic growth of the nation and to the dependency of Peruvians on imported food products.<sup>77</sup> The party, therefore, sought to re-orient the efforts of the central government toward decentralization of power, to assist all provinces to develop their economic wealth, and to grant them the

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<sup>76</sup> Emilio Romero, El descentralismo (Lima: Cio. Impresiones Publicidad, 1932), pp. 37-38.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 110-11.

authority to carry out their development free from Lima's interference.<sup>78</sup>

Why the Decentralists chose to support de la Jara is not altogether clear. Their aims seemed to be limited to the matter of decentralization, and all three candidates were publicly offering more than their nominee. Perhaps they had received secret promises from de la Jara or had concluded that with a new candidate none would receive the popular majority, and in the Assembly they could wield enough power to obtain some desired reforms or even a key cabinet post. Whatever the reason, their nominee was enthusiastically supported by the Alianza Nacional, Acción Republicana and Larco Herrera's Economista party, and on September 22nd de la Jara wired his acceptance.<sup>79</sup>

#### The junta and the political parties

Amidst the electoral confusion and the political fragmentation, everyone carefully watched the Samanez Ocampo junta for any possible sign of favoritism. Upon assuming power its members had taken an oath not to become candidates for any office, and they had stuck by it very closely--with the exception of Larco Herrera, who resigned on July 20th after becoming the presidential choice of his own Economista party. Nothing came of Larco Herrera's candidacy, and thus the guessing continued as to where the junta stood. Sánchez Cerro was the one who expected the least from it and, in fact, feared that it was working to prevent his election or to deny him the office if elected.<sup>80</sup> In

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38.

<sup>79</sup> El Peru, September 23, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> See Eguiguren and Héro Quesada.

fact, though nothing can be conclusively proven, it is fairly clear that the junta was anti-Sánchez Cerro and that it probably favored de la Jara.<sup>81</sup> Samanez Ocampo himself had approved of the efforts of the Concentración, and when it failed he was believed to be backing de la Jara's candidacy.<sup>82</sup> In addition, Jiróncez was reported to be the leader of the Decentralist party which had first nominated de la Jara, and Larco Herrera, after withdrawing from the race, endorsed the Decentralists' choice.<sup>83</sup> Though Osorio and Haya de la Torre also accused the junta of having created de la Jara's candidacy,<sup>84</sup> it was Sánchez Cerro who felt most damaged by it. He began to fear that since the new candidate had only a remote chance of victory, he was nominated principally to take votes away from him and thus enhance the Apristas' chances. Indeed Sánchez Cerro was so convinced of the junta's plot to undermine him that on several occasions he began preparing a military coup, only to desist from the attempt when advised against it.<sup>85</sup> The junta responded to the charges of favoritism by publishing communiques denying everything and reiterating its pledge of impartiality.<sup>86</sup> Ultimately, even if the junta favored a particular candidate, it did not attempt to vitiate the results and supervised one of Peru's most honest elections.

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<sup>81</sup>Revista Semanal, September 24, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>82</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, p. 160.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., pp. 130-31.

<sup>84</sup>Revista Semanal, October 1, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>85</sup>Eguiguren, p. 37.

<sup>86</sup>See, for example, El Comercio, September 24, 1931, p. 1.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ELECTION OF 1931

The election of 1931, due to the social and political tensions, the intensity of personal and ideological differences, and the very closeness of the race, became an arena in which the main opposing forces fought each other knowing that defeat would mean persecution and perhaps destruction. Consequently, the principal campaign issue of Leguismo, foreign capital, Communism, religion, and social reforms became clouded in a barrage of charges and countercharges--rarely based on fact--whose purpose was to discredit the opposition and frighten the electorate.

The issue of Leguismo was one that lent itself particularly well to name-calling tactics. The Apristas for their part had vowed rather self-righteously that their brand of politics was one of justice and morality; they had rejected all previous methods and politicians by striking out with anti-Civilista phobia at all those who had had any connection with past governments. Yet, they were receiving financial and other aid from influential ex-members of the Oucenio, and two of them, Bustamante y Bollivia and Crisólogo Quesada, were in charge of the Secretaría de Economía and of the Secretaría Política respectively.<sup>1</sup> Apra's opposition, through El Comercio and La Opinión, made extensive

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<sup>1</sup>Villanueva, pp. 73-74.

use of these facts to conclude illogically that Haya de la Torre had always been a Leguista, that he had been exiled because of social disruptions rather than political heresy, and that he had finally returned to Peru to assume the leadership of the fallen dictator's organization.<sup>2</sup> Haya de la Torre, however, need not have been a Leguista in order to obtain that support since the members of the Oncenio, persecuted as they had been by Sánchez Cerro, could be expected to back a candidate who represented the strongest challenge to the "hero of Arequipa's" presidential aspirations. The Apristas did not deny these Leguista connections but stated somewhat unconvincingly that, since theirs was a mass movement, it was easily infiltrated by the Leguistas but that the latter would be purged.<sup>3</sup> Then they turned on their critics, especially El Comercio, and accused them of having been soft on the Oncenio and of having gained financially from it.<sup>4</sup>

Though the matter of Leguismo remained the most heated issue, others played a significant role. Charges that the Apristas were anti-religious and that they would expel the clergy from Peru if elected were believed and sometimes initiated by religious groups, probably on the basis of the successful efforts by Haya de la Torre in 1923 to stop the consecration of Peru to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Thus frightened by the Apristas and still resentful of Sánchez Cerro's establishment of the divorce law during his first regime, clerical groups for the most

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<sup>2</sup>El Comercio, August 26, 1931, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>La Esfera, April 10, 1931, pp. 4, 5.

<sup>4</sup>See La Tribuna, 1931, passim.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., August 28, 1931, p. 2.



part ended up supporting de la Jara. Perhaps more damaging than the issue of religion were the questions of nationalism and Communism which the Sánchez Cerristas raised. They emphasized Apra's foreign origins and accused it of working for international rather than national goals, of being an ally of the worldwide communist conspiracy, and of seeking the destruction of the army--the defender of nationality--in order to facilitate the success of its plans. The Apristas, through La Tribuna, denied every specific charge and repeated the explanation that, since the army was made up of members of the middle class, they certainly would not attempt to destroy it; they ridiculed all rumors of an alliance with the Communists and then condemned all Civilistas for having encouraged the growth of the Communist party in an attempt to weaken Apra.<sup>6</sup> Drawn into the struggle, the Communists themselves escalated their attacks on Apra, labeling it a force for the domestication of the workers' revolutionary spirit,<sup>7</sup> a weapon of the small bourgeois and property owners,<sup>8</sup> and a tool of British interests created to undermine the United States and its allies in Peru.<sup>9</sup>

As the campaign progressed both the Aprista and Sánchez Cerrista press, represented by Apra and La Tribuna for the first and El Comercio and La Opinión for the latter, became mere propaganda sheets with La Tribuna and La Opinión, especially, losing all semblance of a newspaper. Both groups had their supporters join the other party in order

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<sup>6</sup>Haya de la Torre, Construyendo, p. 93.; La Tribuna, 1931, passim.

<sup>7</sup>Ricardo Martínez de la Torre, Páginas anti-Apristas (Lima: Ediciones de Frente, 1933 ), p. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>9</sup>Martínez de la Torre, Aprismo y Sánchezcerrismo (Lima: Ediciones de Frente, 1934), p. 9.

to resign from it later and publish uncomplimentary remarks about it. Extensive coverage was also given to all street disorders, of which both parties were guilty. When violence was threatened or was actually carried out against any of the leaders of either party, the respective press organs would increase the propaganda tempo to a feverish pitch--promising retaliation and more violence.<sup>10</sup>

The propaganda war resorted both to the printing of scurrilous pamphlets, such as one questioning Sánchez Cerro's integrity, education, intelligence, family background, and mental stability,<sup>11</sup> and to the more subtle publication of unfounded rumors, such as one printed in La Tribuna stating that because of Sánchez Cerro's poor showing in his tour of southern Peru, he was withdrawing from the presidential race.<sup>12</sup> Not only was the reported withdrawal false but the same tour was being reported by the moderate and anti-Sánchez Cerro newspaper, El Peru, as a success. In another instance La Tribuna tried to exploit a paper shortage by accusing Sánchez Cerro and his supporters of buying up all reserves of paper to muzzle their opposition. The charge was not supported by any other publication even though all were being affected by the shortage.

Numerous rumors were initiated by both Apristas and Sánchez Cerristas almost daily, yet it seems that the Apristas were the more consistent originators of this type of propaganda. Moreover, their publication La Tribuna was perhaps the newspaper which most clearly

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<sup>10</sup> See El Comercio, La Opinión, Apur, La Tribuna, 1931, passim.

<sup>11</sup> Luis Heyson, El comandante del Cronista (Cuzco: n.p.b., 1931).

<sup>12</sup> La Tribuna, August 12, 1931, p. 1.

exemplified a harsh, ultra-partisan brand of journalism; while it was merciless, often without cause, in its criticism of all opponents, it tended to attribute to itself and its party an impossibly exalted degree of moral righteousness. When Arturo Osorio announced his candidacy, for example, the Apristas Perez Treviño and Luis Heyson wrote an article damning Osorio and asking "...Does Dr. Osorio know the meaning of the word loyalty?...We want clean hands, not those which smell of petroleum or guano or graft, but clean hands and consciences without a stain, and Dr. Osorio possesses neither the one nor the other."<sup>13</sup> To the author's knowledge Osorio was not considered by any other contemporaries to be guilty of what the Apristas had charged. He had fought all the political battles since the 1890's, and perhaps his "conscience" was not free of "stain," but how could the Apristas assume such moral superiority when they were receiving financial aid from Leguistas? This same moral double standard has remained a feature of the party, and one of its more tragic aspects is that the Apristas have failed ever to acknowledge it.

As the 1931 election neared, the vehemence of the campaign added credence to the often repeated predictions that Peru was entering a period of violence. It appeared that the clash could not be averted, however, because the electorate was rejecting the not very promising alternatives the moderates were offering. It seemed certain that the voters were going to select either Haya de la Torre or Sánchez Cerro and, meanwhile, both were readying to meet the challenge of the victor with violence.

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<sup>13</sup>La Tribuna, June 18, 1931, p. 3.

### The election results

On October 11, 1931, the Peruvian electorate went to the polls. In spite of the law requiring all eligible voters to participate, only 323,632 out of 392,363 registered voters cast their ballots. Calm reigned throughout the day amidst heavy security precautions by the junta. The press, including La Tribuna, praised the freedom of the election and the democratic spirit with which it had been carried out and pointed to the secret vote as the reason.<sup>14</sup> El Comercio did print telegrams from Sánchez Cerrostas in Cajamarca accusing the Department Court of Elections of not having allowed them to vote, but it declared itself generally satisfied with the proceedings.<sup>15</sup> Reports coming in from throughout the nation seemed to strengthen the optimism of the Lima press. The first report of major irregularities came from La Tribuna, which on October 14th printed the charge that individuals it identified only as "Civilistas" (and the Apristas labeled all other parties as Civilista) had had 25,000 ballots printed like the ones used in the election. The name of a candidate had supposedly been printed on them (the name was not given), and then they had been handed out together with some money.<sup>16</sup> In spite of this charge the newspaper considered the election valid, as at that point Haya de la Torre was leading all other candidates in the unofficial returns. On October 16th El Comercio formally charged that irregularities had occurred not only in Cajamarca but in Trujillo where apparently officials of several polling places

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<sup>14</sup> El Peru, El Comercio, La Tribuna, et. al., October 12, 1931.

<sup>15</sup> El Comercio, October 12, 1931, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> La Tribuna, October 12, 1931, p. 3.

had refused to give ballots of candidates who were not Apristas and had not really allowed the secret vote. But the paper also reported that the culprits had already been indicted by the local judicial authorities.<sup>17</sup>

By October 17th, unofficial results indicated that with 60,000 votes counted, Haya de la Torre was leading Sánchez Cerro by about 2,000 votes, and officials from areas where irregularities had been charged by either and/or both groups wired to the junta that they had no proof to substantiate those accusations.<sup>18</sup> La Tribuna continued to underplay the charges of fraud as of that time and ran headlines such as "The bribe failing, it tried fraud, and this failing it prepared loud protests" obviously referring to the Sánchez Cerroista faction, which it also accused of preparing a coup.<sup>19</sup> It is clear, therefore, that as of October 18th the Apristas, with their candidate ahead by a few thousand votes, were willing to accept the election results and indicated that if there had been an attempt to commit fraud on the part of the opposition, it had failed. On October 20th, however, as Sánchez Cerro took over the lead in the unofficial count, La Tribuna published an editorial charging fraud in Callao, Tumbes, Ica, Lima, Piura, and Moquegua. It advanced the dubious argument that because the Apra party was stronger than any other in those areas, it was strange that its superiority was not reflected at the polls.<sup>20</sup> Of course, the

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<sup>17</sup>El Comercio, October 16, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>El Peru, October 18, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup>La Tribuna, October 18, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>La Tribuna, October 20, 1931, p. 1.

party had never proven its claim of superiority, but from that day forth similar charges were repeated, and their vehemence paralleled the rate of Sánchez Cerro's growing majority. The Aprista press once again reminded its readers that the forces supporting Sánchez Cerro were "ignorance, self-interest, hate, and fraud,"<sup>21</sup> and it argued further that there must have been fraud because Peruvians could not willingly have chosen corruption, sickness, and Civilismo over purity, honesty and Aprismo.<sup>22</sup> On October 23rd Haya de la Torre himself spoke in Trujillo denying the possibility that Sánchez Cerro could win without the use of fraud. He warned that if the opposition came to power by such means, it would undermine the principle of popular sovereignty, and this, he added, would not be tolerated by the nation; Peruvians could not accept "...that another faction of Civilismo impose on the country another tyranny as nefarious as the one it suffered during the eleven years of Leguía's Civilismo."<sup>23</sup> To this threat of violence Haya de la Torre added the further note that his followers were ready to defend their party against any attempt by Sánchez Cerro to destroy it.<sup>24</sup>

The Apristas' comments on the election seemed to confirm rumors first printed by El Comercio and La Opinión that the Apristas were preparing a coup. La Opinión in an editorial warned the Apristas "...to keep in mind that we are determined to subdue you peacefully or by force to the rule of law."<sup>25</sup> On October 23rd a commission of the Unión Revolucionaria headed by Luis A. Eguiguren went to the presidential palace to show Sánchez Ocampo documents which supposedly confirmed

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., October 23, 1931, p. 1.      <sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., October 25, 1931, p. 3.      <sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Revista Semanal, October 23, 1931, p. 1.

rumors of a coup aimed at undermining the election results.<sup>26</sup> The next day the junta published a communique calling upon the army, police, political parties, and press to support the final results when issued by the National Court of Elections. The junta also reiterated its belief that the election had been an exemplarily free and honest one.<sup>27</sup> The election, in fact, continued to be accepted as honest by all segments of the press with the exception of La Tribuna and Apra. The leftist and pro-Aprista daily La Hoche, after accepting the accuracy of the rumors printed in El Comercio of an imminent Aprista coup, declared that such a step would be absurd and suggested that lawful means be used to fight the new regime.<sup>28</sup> La Tribuna, while denying the coup rumors, continued to publish more of Haya de la Torre's belligerent speeches. In one the leader of the party declared that "...the betrayal of the nation's public opinion forces us to assume a vigilant and energetic attitude and a protective posture toward the country's legitimate right of not being governed by Civilismo." He also urged every Aprista to take his place "in order to fulfill our historic task of preventing the installation of new tyrannies and new oligarchic systems which will emerge if Civilismo reaches power."<sup>29</sup>

Amidst the growing turmoil which was enveloping the country, the organs of the non-Aprista press attempted to diffuse the crisis by repeatedly asserting their confidence in the electoral process. They

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<sup>26</sup> El Peru, October 24, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., October 25, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Patria, October 27, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> La Tribuna, October 27, 1931, p. 5.

admitted that in some cases there had been irregularities but stressed that generally they had not been willful, but rather honest errors. In addition, the Departmental Court of Election had attempted to rectify all of them, and those which might have been overlooked could not in any way change the now significant majority accumulated by Sánchez Cerro.<sup>30</sup> Thus, as already mentioned, the leftist La Noche accepted the results and urged that opposition to the new regime be legal;<sup>31</sup> the Osorista official publication Nuestro Distrito, before ending publication on October 22nd, expressed its satisfaction with the results;<sup>32</sup> and El Peru, which had been founded in January, 1931, as an organ of Acción Republicana, a supporter of the Concentración and finally of de la Jara, on its last day of publication once again praised the freedom and honesty of the election and urged that the victor attempt to heal the wounds of the nation.<sup>33</sup> Revista Semanal, a weekly which leaned toward Osoros, called upon Apra to accept its defeat, for the people had spoken and therefore--if it considered itself democratic--it should abide by that decision. It also urged the party to desist from questioning the validity of the election any further because the nation could ill afford the resulting uncertainty and potential chaos, and it suggested that Apra assume its role of opposition and allow Sánchez Cerro to prove himself.<sup>34</sup> Similar stands were taken by the moderate dailies Patria and La Crónica,

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, El Peru, October 23, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> See above.

<sup>32</sup> Revista Semanal, October 22, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> El Peru, October 26, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Revista Semanal, October 29, 1931, p. 1.



by the weekly Variedades, and by de la Jara and Osorio. It is evident, therefore, that Apra was alone in calling the election a fraud, but it continued to press its dubious case from the Departmental Courts to the National Court of Elections, thus escalating tensions since the president-elect could not be officially declared such until the National Court reviewed all complaints. Though both Apristas and Sánchez Cerristas questioned the honesty of the results in those areas where they had been defeated, the Sánchez Cerristas formally challenged the results only in Cajamarca, La Libertad, and Tacna, while the Apristas asked the National Court for a ruling on practically every department won by the other side.

The National Court of Elections, as already stated, was composed of the chief of the Supreme Court, one representative from each of the four national universities, and four representatives selected at random from the various departments. Its composition was never attacked by any group. It had made itself accessible to all the political forces and had opened all its hearings to the public. The Court's power to void election results came from the electoral law, which stated that the National Court of Elections would resolve "the appeals for nullification when grave irregularities which are sufficient to change the results of the election can be proved."<sup>35</sup> The provision that the irregularity had to be serious enough to change the nature of the election is an important one, for, as will be shown, the number of ballots taken to task was usually small and could not have possibly altered the national outcome. It must also be emphasized that the Departmental Courts had already passed judgment on all charges brought before the National Court,

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<sup>35</sup> El Comercio, December 1, 1931, p. 6.

and their decisions were ordinarily upheld. This same result occurred whether Sánchez Cerro or the Apristas had won majorities. Whether during its long proceedings the members of the National Court were influenced by the Aprista propaganda continuously crying fraud and ultimately attacking the Court itself cannot be determined. There is only one case, however, in which the National Court clearly seemed to abandon impartiality. In the Province of Tumbes the Apristas had accused the father of a member of the Court, Enrique Arnaez, of improperly using his position as the head of the provincial electoral court to advance the cause of a candidate of Unión Revolucionaria. The National Court reviewed the charges and, in spite of strong evidence against Arnaez, dismissed them.<sup>36</sup>

Apart from the Tumbes case, the National Court approached its task with apparent fairness. When it reviewed the charges against the Apristas in the Departments of La Libertad, Tacna, and Cajamarca, it found no evidence in the case of the first two, and in dealing with the third upheld the validity of the presidential election but annulled the Assembly election. It was argued by members of Unión Revolucionaria and other parties that in Cajamarca they had been prevented from placing their candidates on the ballot and that their supporters had been refused the right to vote. This contention seemed wholly plausible if only because Haya de la Torre was outpolled 11,990 to 9,650 in that department by the combined vote of his two closest opponents, Osorio and Sánchez Cerro, yet the forces of the latter had failed to win even one Assembly seat. At the very least the outcome had violated the

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<sup>36</sup> See *El Comercio*, *la Tribuna*, *Revista Semanal*, October-November, 1931, passim.

provision in the electoral law regarding minority representation in every department.<sup>37</sup> In addition, the National Court found clear evidence that the departmental authorities had illegally refused to accept the candidacies of several individuals, even though all but one had fulfilled the electoral requirements. This situation had been brought to the attention of the National Court prior to the election, and it had ordered the Departmental Court to include the contested names on the ballot, but the local authorities had not complied and had in fact refused to meet in session while the dispute was going on. It was also found that the same local authorities had not made available to all polling places the ballots containing the names of all candidates.<sup>38</sup> There was no similar incident presented to the National Court, which seemed to leave no alternative but the annulment of the results on a department-wide basis. The Cajamarca decision changed considerably the character of the Assembly, making it easier for Sánchez Cerro to obtain a working majority, and not just Apristas but other critics have theorized that the annulment of the Assembly vote in Cajamarca was a ploy to ensure the Sánchez Cerroistas the desired parliamentary majority.<sup>39</sup> This author, however, has found no evidence supporting such a contention.

After investigating the charges against the Apristas, the National Court was faced with the task of reviewing the electoral

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<sup>37</sup> See Chapter III.

<sup>38</sup> *El Comercio*, November 29, 1931, p. 5.

<sup>39</sup> Jose Pareja Paz-Soldan, *Los constitucionales del Perú* (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1954), pp. 313-319.

process in practically every department won by the Sánchez Cerristas, its validity being questioned by the Apra party. The first case heard concerned the Province of Moquegua where the Apristas sought to nullify nine ballot boxes for assorted irregularities, including an alleged disparity between the number of registered electors and the total of votes cast. The National Court dismissed some of the charges for insufficient evidence, and though others were held to be valid, they were too petty to warrant the annulment of the nine ballot boxes which would have unjustifiably altered the outcome of the election there.<sup>40</sup> In Moquegua, Haya de la Torre had run a poor third, having 203 votes as compared to Sánchez Cerro's 1,516. The Apristas had also charged that in the Department of Puno the Court of Elections had been illegally constituted. In this case the National Court dismissed the charges on the ground that the Apristas' objections should have been presented within five days of the publication of the news regarding the selection of that Departmental Court, as specified by law. Apparently this had not been done, and the National Court also dismissed other minor charges in Puno for lack of evidence.<sup>41</sup> In the Department of Ica, where Sánchez Cerro had received six times the number of votes won by Haya de la Torre, the Apristas charged that illiterates had been allowed to vote (a charge often used by Sánchez Cerristas as well against the Apristas), that some had voted twice, that more people had voted than there were registered voters, and that some ballot boxes had been lost. The National Court decided, however, that since the Departmental Court had

<sup>40</sup>El Comercio, November 6, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 2. November 7, 1931, p. 7.

denied the loss of any ballot boxes and had already cancelled the votes of a number of illiterates, the results were to be declared valid.<sup>42</sup>

Because the Apristas had questioned the results in practically every department won by Sánchez Cerro, a month after the election had been held the day for the final certification of the president-elect could still not be set. The delay was causing some anxiety among the Sánchez Cerristas, for they feared a coup to deny their candidate the presidency. Working at a faster pace, the National Court reviewed the election results in the Departments of Madre de Dios, Loreto, San Martín, Ayacucho, Junín, Cuzco, and Arequipa and in the Province of Callao.<sup>43</sup> And after nullifying the results of several polling stations, it otherwise upheld the validity of the voting in those areas. The National Court admitted the presence of some irregularities but saw them as the result of bureaucratic failures rather than as a willful attempt to commit fraud. In addition the departmental authorities had already investigated and corrected most of the errors, while those which had been overlooked were generally so minor that the outcome of the election would not have been changed.<sup>44</sup>

Its review of the entire election completed, the National Court on November 28th officially declared Sánchez Cerro the duly elected president of Peru. This decision was accepted by the non-Aprista press, Osoroes, de la Jara, and the ruling junta. In the manifiesto he presented

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., November 8, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup>Toribio Sierra, the newly elected representative from Callao, was expelled from the Apra party when he declared that the election in his province had been honest.

<sup>44</sup>See El Comercio, November, 1931.

in December, 1931, as the junta's Minister of the Interior, Francisco Tamayo assured the Assembly that throughout the electoral process, from registration to the final count, the judicial and electoral authorities had acted with complete autonomy and under the close supervision of all political parties and candidates, who had been given extensive powers to defend their interests during each step of the process.<sup>45</sup> It is doubtful, in fact, that the junta would have allowed Sánchez Cerro to win illegally, for though its sympathies during the election were not overtly expressed, it is a fact that they were not with the "hero of Arequipa." In spite of the general agreement on the honesty of the election, however, the Apristas continued to claim fraud.

With the official announcement of Sánchez Cerro's victory, the National Court also released the final results. They revealed that out of 392,363 registered voters only 323,632 went to the polls, or 82.48% of the total.<sup>46</sup> Of the votes cast, Sánchez Cerro received 152,149; Haya de la Torre, 106,088; de la Jara, 21,950; and Osores, 19,640. The remaining votes were invalidated, including more than 16,000 from departments won by Sánchez Cerro.<sup>47</sup> Sánchez Cerro carried twelve departments plus the Provinces of Callao, Moquegua, and Tumbes, while Haya de la Torre received a majority in six. Osores won in the sparsely populated Amazonas and Madre de Dios. The Apristas carried

<sup>45</sup>Tamayo, p. 30.

<sup>46</sup>Peru. Servicio de Estadística y Censo Electoral, Extracto estadístico y censo electoral de la república (Lima: Taller de Linotipia, 1933), p. 216.

<sup>47</sup>See chart on page 134 together with figures provided by the Extracto estadístico indicating the correct number of people who voted. By subtracting from the latter the election's official results, it is possible to obtain a rough estimate of the votes which were invalidated by the courts.

handily the northern Departments of Cajamarca, Lambayeque and La Libertad, which were traditional Leguista power centers, the birthplace of many of the Aprista leaders--including Haya de la Torre--and the center of a number of large foreign petroleum and agricultural establishments. They also won Huancayo in the central region, Loreto in the east, and Tacna in the south. Sánchez Cerro captured the rest of the central and southern departments and Piura in the north.<sup>48</sup>

Who were the voters? Racially, 59.74 were officially classified as mestizos; 24.96, Indians; and the rest white or negro.<sup>49</sup> Educationally, 31.65 had had only three years or less of elementary school, 54.60 had up to five years of elementary education, and 10.70 had attended or were attending a secondary school. The rest had attended or were attending commercial or higher institutions.<sup>50</sup> These figures were only approximate, and the true educational level was probably lower since many were found to declare that they had more education than was the case.<sup>51</sup> Professionally, 44.47% or 174,462 of the voters were farmers; 10.46% or 41,047, white-collar workers; 6.29% or 24,670, merchants; 4.34% or 17,045, blue-collar workers (obrereros); 1.39% or 5,438, students; 0.49% or 1,910, miners, and the rest (about 33%) occupied more than one hundred other professions.<sup>52</sup> The age of the voters was relatively young--44.49% of the total were thirty and under, and 72.37% were forty and under.<sup>53</sup> Finally, 49.15% were single and

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<sup>48</sup>See Table 1. It contains the official results of the 1921 presidential election. It was obtained from the National Court of Elections in Lima.

<sup>49</sup>Servicio de Estadística, *Demografía estadística*, p. 218.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, *chart.*

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 226.

47.28% were married. The rest were widowers.<sup>54</sup>

TABLE 1

PROCESO ELECTORAL DE 1931. CÓMPUTO TOTAL DE SUFRAGIOS  
VÁLIDOS, EMITIDOS PARA PRESIDENTE  
DE LA REPÚBLICA

Departamentos y Provincias	Luis Sánchez Cerro	Victor Raul Haya de la Torre	Dr. Arturo Osorez	José M. de la Jara y Ureta
Amazonas . . . . .	541	771	912	65
Apurimac . . . . .	2,035	1,751	714	429
Ancash . . . . .	12,163	5,615	453	1,207
Ayacucho . . . . .	4,492	1,727	394	636
Arequipa . . . . .	11,964	3,965	440	2,007
Callao (Prov.) . . . .	7,328	3,302	426	557
Cajamarca . . . . .	4,630	9,650	7,360	465
Huancavelica . . . . .	3,177	1,329	61	525
Cuzco . . . . .	5,734	2,428	113	2,202
Ica . . . . .	8,638	1,504	140	466
Huanuco . . . . .	2,177	2,438	510	188
La Libertad . . . . .	4,776	19,080	419	1,356
Junin . . . . .	15,773	8,163	1,147	1,191
Lima . . . . .	44,429	26,664	3,620	6,603
Lambayeque . . . . .	4,364	7,536	388	137
Madre de Dios . . . .	59	95	127	. .
Loreto . . . . .	1,382	3,732	601	315
Piura . . . . .	9,519	1,451	388	1,411
Moquegua (Prov.) . . .	1,516	203	28	208
San Martín . . . . .	2,200	540	569	437
Puno . . . . .	3,896	2,110	320	1,438
Tacna . . . . .	402	1,814	392	54
Tumbes (Prov.) . . . .	954	220	118	53
Totales	152,149	106,088	19,640	21,950

Though less than 10% of the total population was legally permitted to vote and only about 33% of the entire Peruvian adult population went to the polls,<sup>55</sup> the election had allowed the largest number of people

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>55</sup>Peru. Dirección Nacional de Estadística, Censo nacional de población y ocupación, 1940, I (Lima: n.pb., 1944). Pan American Union, The Peruvian economy (Washington D.C.: n.pb., 1950), p. 17. The



in the history of Peru to express their preferences. Moreover, the lower class had been the deciding factor in electing the president. This was substantiated by the Apristas when, before discovering "fraud," they claimed that lower class support had been won by Sánchez Cerro because of the supposed betrayal of Socialist and Communist elements who had "sold" their votes to the Civilistas.<sup>56</sup>

The electoral outcome clearly points to the failure of Apra to unite the "exploited" classes of Peru under its banner. The party had set out to unify the peasants, the workers, and the middle class under the leadership of the intellectuals, believing that the economic depression--affected as it had especially the above groups--would make them responsive to the party which sought to redeem them from the exploitation of the ruling classes and foreign interests. That this premise was not fulfilled indicates that other factors beside the economic were important in the 1931 election. For the Apristas the principal factor was, of course, fraud, but the less partial observer would stress, among others, Sánchez Cerro's nationalism and his obvious charisma as a popular military hero; the general fear and suspicion of the Apristas' stand on religion, the military, Leguismo, class struggle, and internationalism; and finally the untried newness of the party. The weekly Revista Semanal expressed the belief that Apra had lost the

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percentage is only a rough estimate which was obtained by taking the size of the Peruvian male population (1940 census) together with the projected population figure for 1931 as computed on the basis of the 1940 census. The 1931 size of the male population was then roughly, but conservatively, estimated from these statistics.

<sup>56</sup>La Tribuna, October 23, 1931, p. 2.

election because of its failings as a popular force, its inability to recognize Peru's real situation, and "the absurd halo" with which it enveloped its political schemes.<sup>57</sup> It also concluded that the people had expressed their confidence in traditional political forces rather than in "young demagogues."<sup>58</sup>

The election results underscored Apra's repudiation by elements it most sought to represent, especially the Indian and the urban voter. For example, the areas Apra carried had only one-seventh of the Indian registered voters, and the only three departments--Huancaavelica, Ica, and Puno--where Indian voters outnumbered all others, were won by Sánchez Cerro by a substantial majority.<sup>59</sup> Complete statistics on the voting in urban centers are not available. However, it appears that Sánchez Cerro carried most of them. It may be hypothesized that electoral victory in departments with a sizeable concentration of urban voters would be improbable without a majority in those areas. Success in the Department of Lima, for example, would have been impossible without an excellent showing in the Province of Lima which, with the city proper and the adjoining municipal districts, controlled 65.38% of the vote of the entire department. Similarly, the Province of Arequipa accounted for 51.54% of the vote in its respective department, that of Trujillo, 42.17%; Ica, 47.02%; Chiclayo, 57.70%; and Lambayeque, 42.30%. The following table will show the provinces containing urban centers with about 6,000 or more registered voters and representing a high percentage of the total departmental registration.

<sup>57</sup>Revista Semanal, October 23, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup>Servicio de Estadística, passim; Chart p. 15.

TABLE 2

Urban Area	Department and Province	Registered Voters	Percentage of Department
Lima	Lima	65,903	67.78
Trujillo	La Libertad (A)*	13,848	42.17
Callao	Callao	13,003	100.00
Arequipa	Arequipa	12,319	51.54
Jauja	Junin	10,088	29.41
Huancayo	Junin	9,284	27.07
Chiclayo	Lambayeque (A)	9,036	57.70
Chota	Cajamarca (A)	7,842	24.54
Huaraz	Ancash	7,366	29.07
Lambayeque	Lambayeque (A)	6,625	42.30
Piura	Piura	6,384	32.24
Ica	Ica	6,138	47.02
Cajamarca	Cajamarca (A)	5,955	18.63

\*The letter A indicates the areas won by the Apristas, considering only the total received in the department. The rest were carried by Sánchez Cerro.

Keeping in mind that urban or even provincial returns were not separately available, and that only department-wide totals could be obtained, one may safely conclude that the Apristas carried the provinces and corresponding urban centers of Trujillo, Cajamarca, Chota, Chiclayo, and Lambayeque containing a total electoral population of about 44,000. Sánchez Cerro, on the other hand, won the rest of the provinces listed in Table 2 with a voting population of about 132,000.<sup>69</sup>

Though the presidential campaign had resulted principally in a race between the two major contenders, the selection of the Constitutional Assembly seemed to have been decided to a large extent by departmental considerations. The Sánchez Ceristas won 64 of 145 available seats, considerably short of a majority, and the Apristas captured

<sup>69</sup>Servicio de Estadística, pp. 22-234.

26, excluding the ones annulled from Cajamarca. The poor showing by both parties must be attributed principally to two factors: their candidates' obvious lack of appeal and the unsuspected strength shown by the Decentralists. Even though their party had failed to create much enthusiasm for its presidential candidate de la Jara, it found its philosophy of local autonomy appealing to many areas of the nation and was thus able to weaken the congressional power of both major candidates by capturing 28 seats. In Ancash, for example, where Sánchez Cerro had received 12,163 votes; Haya de la Torre, 5,615; and de la Jara, 1,207, the Decentralists won one-third of the seats while the Apristas failed to capture even one. The Department of Apurímac which had given Sánchez Cerro 2,035 votes; Haya de la Torre, 1,715; and de la Jara, 429, elected four Decentralists and one Aprista representative. Similarly, in Puno, Cuzco, and Junín they showed considerably more influence than their presidential candidate.<sup>61</sup> Of the remaining seats in the Assembly, 12 were declared vacant due to irregularities, 9 went to Independents, while the rest (six) were shared by Socialists and Osoristas.<sup>62</sup>

#### The post election crisis

Too much has been made of Aprista charges that the 1931 election was a fraud. A survey of works, especially in English, which in any way touch on the 1931 election shows that the authors have generally

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<sup>61</sup>Congreso Constituyente de 1931, Diario de los debates del Congreso Constituyente de 1931, I (Lima: Editora la Opinión, 1932), passim.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.; la Crónica, November 24, 1931, p. 2.

assumed the charges to be true.<sup>63</sup> One can sympathize with those writers' assumption that, if truly given a choice, a people burdened as the Peruvians were by a slew of economic and social problems could not select a so-called conservative rightist force over a supposedly leftist-reformist one. For better or for worse, they did. What is less acceptable is the fact that those writers blindly accepted the Apristas' propaganda, failing to recognize some of the probable motivations behind Apra's fraud claims. The party's defeat appeared to be so thorough that its leadership must have concluded that quiet acceptance of the results jeopardized the future of the movement. In charging fraud, it sought to preserve the party's manufactured aura of invincibility and its assertions--never proved--that it represented the majority of Peruvians. In addition, the party feared that once in power Sánchez Cerro would attempt to destroy it. Thus, in requiring the review of virtually all election results by the National Court of Elections, it apparently hoped to create enough uncertainty and tension to encourage a coup by the junta or other elements, thus invalidating the election. The fraud claims were also intended to shroud Sánchez Cerro's victory in such an aura of illegality that Apra itself could justifiably carry out a coup. To be considered, of course, was also the clear and often rumored possibility that Sanchez Cerro himself

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<sup>63</sup>See, for example, Carleton Beals, Fire on the Andes (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1934); Samuel Guy Inman, Latin America, its place in world life (Chicago: Willet, Clark and Co., 1937); and Harry Kantor, The ideology and program of the Peruvian Aprista movement (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1953), considered by some to be the most authoritative work on Apra. Recently, however, the tendency has been to recognize the honesty of the 1931 election; see, for example, Frederick Pike, The modern history of Peru (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1967).

would try to take power by force.<sup>64</sup> This would likewise have worked in favor of the Apristas, for it would be seen as confirming their fraud claims.

In keeping with its campaign to discredit the results of the election, the central committee of the Apra party asked the junta as far back as November 19th to declare the entire election null and void because of the inflating of the electoral register, the partiality of the Departmental Courts of Elections, and the "scandalous" actions of the National Court in its review of the electoral disputes.<sup>65</sup> The junta replied the next day that it could not take action because it respected the autonomy of the electoral authorities, and it was up to them to act on Apra's request.<sup>66</sup> The following day Haya de la Torre announced that the election had given the Apristas a majority, and that, therefore, in spite of the Civilistas' attempts to undermine the wishes of the people through fraud, he was the legitimate president of Peru.<sup>67</sup> The announcement, which had come in the midst of street violence, charges of attempted assassinations by both sides, and rumors of coups, merely contributed to the further deterioration of the situation. On November 27th street clashes resulted in several deaths; Sánchez Cerros claimed that an attempt had been made on the life of their leader, and the Apristas equally claimed that three unsuccessful attempts had been made on the life of the editor of La Tribuna, Manuel Seoane.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Eguiguren, p. 46.

<sup>65</sup>La Tribuna, November 19, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., November 20, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., November 23, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup>See the Lima press in general for the month of November, 1931, but especially El Comercio, La Crónica, La Tribuna, and La Opinión.

Reacting to the rumored assassination attempt on Seoane, Haya de la Torre sent him a telegram stating that now that the Civilista repression had begun, the party was ready to free the country from that terror.<sup>69</sup> Heyson, one of the more fiery Aprista, also wrote Seoane asserting that "Aprismo cannot accept such affronts because we are resolved to put an end to, in the name of justice, all the Civilista traitors and assassins."<sup>70</sup> At the same time, la Tribuna was spreading news of profound dissatisfaction in the country and was disseminating a feeling of impending doom. Not very subtly it also seemed to be urging the army to revolt by playing up such front-page news as a military coup in San Salvador. It presented it with the headline, "The revolution was carried out to prevent ruin," and then editorialized that it was the obligation of the younger army officers to take energetic measures to prevent anyone from leading the country to disaster.<sup>71</sup>

The uncertainty of the post-electoral period did nothing to assuage Sánchez Cerros' fears, acquired since before the election, that the junta would instigate or welcome a coup to negate their leader's right to the presidency. The junta, in fact, contributed to those fears by giving some indication that it was not eager to turn over power to Sánchez Cerro. For example, even though it had never questioned the validity of the election, it delayed the call of the Junta Preparatoria which, according to the law, had to meet ten days before the Assembly could be seated and the president could take office.

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<sup>69</sup>La Tribuna, November 23, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., November 29, 1931, p. 13.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., December 4, 1931, p. 1.

The apparent reason for this procrastination was that the junta wanted to pass several last-minute decrees, and their preparation was taking some time.<sup>72</sup> Among these new measures, the one which most irritated the Sánchez Cerristas was the one which forbade the firing of any public employees, except under special circumstances, until the Assembly passed a special statute which established their rights and obligations.<sup>73</sup> The Sánchez Cerristas had also resented the junta's order of November 16th which allowed Leguía to be moved to a hospital for reasons of health. Undoubtedly the ex-president was in grave need of better medical attention, but El Comercio expressed the Sánchez Cerristas' fear that this action might have grave political consequences since the Apristas (and for that matter the Leguistas) were not accepting the results of the election, and Leguía might be used as one more pawn against the newly elected regime.<sup>74</sup> Leguista-Aprista inspired unrest in Lima, Chosica, Trujillo (where ten persons died), Cajamarca, Huancayo, and Cerro de Pasco underscored that fear.<sup>75</sup>

Finally, faced with the possibility of a coup by Sánchez Cerro and an attempt by Luis A. Eguiguren (the President of the Assembly by virtue of the fact that he had received a larger popular vote than any other representative) to sidestep the junta's authority by convening the Juntas Preparatorias himself, on November 19th Sumarez Ocampo set

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<sup>72</sup> Revista Semanal, November 12, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>73</sup> Huancayo, pp. 33-34.

<sup>74</sup> El Comercio, November 17, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> El Comercio, La Crónica, Revista Semanal, New York Times, November-December, 1931, passim.



December 8th as the date for the installation of the Constitutional Assembly.<sup>76</sup> On that day, also, the junta stepped down and quietly allowed Sánchez Cerro to take office.

With Sánchez Cerro's inauguration on December 8th, what could be defined as the first phase of the Revolution of Arequipa came to an end. On the same day, however, there began the second--a return to constitutional government. After about a year of interregnum, which had seen the displacement of several governments, the "hero of Arequipa" quite logically returned to power to implement the promises he had made in the August, 1930, Manifesto and in subsequent declarations. Obviously, the circumstances had changed. The period of national cooperation and enthusiasm which had followed the end of the Oncenio had given way to national division and trepidation. It has been suggested by some authors, including Victor Andrés Belaunde, that a national crisis could have been averted if, following the 1931 election, Sánchez Cerro had attempted to create a national coalition including leftists in his cabinet, and if the leftists--especially Apra--had responded by accepting the election's results instead of greeting the new government with an opposition bordering on revolution.<sup>77</sup> Understandably, these were grave shortcomings, but it appears unlikely that after months of threatening to destroy each other the Apristas and Sánchez Cerristas could have reached an understanding through any compromise. An agreement would have undermined Apra's self-imposed image of purity and righteousness, and it would have been considered a sell-out by many leaders of

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<sup>76</sup>Tamayo, p. 32.

<sup>77</sup>Victor Andrés Belaunde, Meditaciones Peruanas (Lima: Cia. de Impresiones y Publicidad, 1932), p. 156.

the Sánchez Cerrista movement.

The Sánchez Cerrista mood was highlighted by an intra-party leadership struggle. With the victory of Sánchez Cerro, pre-1919 Civilista faces reappeared in power, and for a while they were to exercise direct control over government policy. However, it quickly became apparent that Sánchez Cerro, ideologically and temperamentally, relied more on a group of young rightist nationalists who had matured during the Oncomania, who were more conservative than their Civilista predecessors, and who seemed more concerned with putting into practice a philosophy of "order before progress." The strikes, the Aprista revolutionary threat, and the general unrest which followed the election destroyed all chances of a compromise between the older and milder Civilistas and the young rightists, and eventually the philosophy of the latter prevailed.<sup>78</sup>

With the success of the rightists the possibility of a further compromise with the Apristas completely evaporated, and it became a matter of time before the confrontation on which both groups had set their sights would occur. When it did, Peru suffered one of the most violent periods of its history.

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<sup>78</sup>Hiro Quezada, *Sánchez Cerro*, p. 90.

PART III

THE SECOND SANCHEZ CERRO REGIME

## CHAPTER VI

### POLITICAL CRISIS, 1931-1933

The presidential election of 1931 had set the two main political powers in Peru on a confrontation course. The harshness of the campaign, the Apristas' refusal to recognize defeat, and the numerous rebellious incidents which occurred prior to inauguration on December 8th so hardened the political climate as to dispel any hope of compromise. Such pessimism was confirmed by Sánchez Cerro's brief inauguration speech in which he attacked those upholding dangerous economic, political, and social doctrines. He declared that he was resolved to defend the State from all dangers menacing its existence, its social order, and the stability of its national institutions "without concern as to the origin or magnitude of this danger."<sup>1</sup>

The day before the inauguration La Tribuna had published a manifesto from the national executive committee of the Apra party outlining its battle plans against the "fraudulently elected regime." It promised to fight without truce for the implementation of its program in opposition to the conservatism which was coming to power. While the Manifesto proposed to follow the legal path, though paradoxically declaring the election and the regime illegal, it called upon all Apristas to be ready for "the call" the party might make in

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<sup>1</sup>El Comercio, December 8, 1931, p. 2. (Aftn ed.)

case "the essential basis of our social organism or the personal and public freedoms of which we make ourselves untiring defenders are endangered."<sup>2</sup> Thus, at first, the Apristas sat in the Assembly harassing the majority and propagandizing their movement. But beyond this mere vocal opposition there existed the seething threat that they would resort to more violent action.

It is fruitless to argue whether it was the Apristas or the Sánchez Cerros who sparked the subsequent hostilities. Their confrontation cannot be divorced from the general political and economic conditions then afflicting Latin America and the rest of the world. The months in which Sánchez Cerro held power represented one of the most restive periods in recent history in which three forces--Fascism, Democracy, and Communism--were fighting for supremacy. The struggle was so intense that in much of the world ordinary means of reaching and maintaining power were no longer deemed sufficient. Assassinations, propaganda, press censorship, riots, frequent and violent strikes, suppression of personal liberties, etc., were all considered to be an essential ingredient of protest or of government.

In Peru both the Apristas and the Sánchez Cerros had threatened each other with destruction, and predictably both sought ways of protecting themselves. Together with the question of self-preservation, however, there was another ingredient present in the struggle. The Apristas, as the defeated electoral party and as the self-appointed defenders of the "masses" against "Fascism" and "imperialism," felt compelled to resort to violent and illegal methods of opposition. The Sánchez Cerros, as the victorious party and as the self-proclaimed

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<sup>2</sup>The Tribune, December 7, 1931, p. 1.

defenders of Peruvian nationality and institutions, undertook their protection by checking and persecuting the Apristas and anyone suspected of collaborating with them.

### The Emergency Law

Following his inauguration Sánchez Cerro, in the tradition of past centralist governments, proceeded to entrench himself in power at both local and national levels. Thus, to ensure control of local government, he continued Leguía's policy--criticized in the Manifesto of Arequipa--of appointing Juntas de Notables to rule over municipalities until elections could be held. He also appointed to the highest departmental positions faithful followers, chosen most often on the basis of anti-Aprista militancy rather than competence, and ordered all ministries and even Congress to dismiss old employees and replace them with loyal followers. He also proceeded early in his regime to insure his predominance over the Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

With 64 to 66 hard-core supporters, but with a number of Decentralists and Independents assuring his party of a tenuous majority, Sánchez Cerro made the Assembly the jealous guardian of the executive's interests. Under the leadership of the youthful Alfredo Herrera and Luis A. Flores, and the not-so-young Clemente Revilla and José Matías de Manzanilla, the government's forces extended the power of the executive by opposing and defeating any motion intended in some way to limit Sánchez Cerro's freedom of action or to embarrass him. Sánchez Cerro kept the actions of the Assembly under close scrutiny and was not reluctant to call the leadership to the palace to express his strong "disgusto"

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<sup>3</sup>See El Congreso and Diario de los Debates, December, 1931.

over measures which did not please him.<sup>4</sup>

For a short time the President of the Assembly, Luis A. Eguiguren, an old friend of Sánchez Cerro, attempted to preserve some of the independence of the legislature by failing to heed some of the executive's requests, but his power was gradually undermined and eventually he was removed. For their part the minorities, and especially the Apristas, used the Assembly to propagandize their own causes and to carry on a relentless criticism of the executive. Arguments often developed with the government's forces, and at times they riotously led to brawls.<sup>5</sup>

The tension in the Assembly was reflected by the unrest which continued to grip the nation. El Comercio reported that in one of the Apristas' meetings in Chiclayo, representatives Luis Heyson, Armando Alva Diaz, and Agustin Vallejos pronounced "subversive" speeches.<sup>6</sup> In Piñan a clash between Apristas and the police left ten dead and many wounded.<sup>7</sup> In Callao, Sánchez Cerros were accused of having set fire to Apra's headquarters where the newspaper Apra was also printed.<sup>8</sup> In Lima the free operation of La Tribuna was impaired when the Minister of the Interior announced the sale of the state-owned building where the newspaper was printed.<sup>9</sup> In the Department of Lima the prefect prohibited all political demonstrations because of the continuing unrest. He

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<sup>4</sup>Eguiguren, pp. 54-55.

<sup>5</sup>See Diario de los Peruanos, December-February, 1931-32.

<sup>6</sup>El Comercio, December 10, 1931, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., December 11, 1931, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup>La Tribuna, December 9, 1931, pp. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1931, p. 1.

also closed both the Aprista and Sánchez Cerristas' headquarters and forcefully dispersed the continuing demonstrations before Congress.<sup>10</sup> In Trujillo a general strike, official attempts to ban all political propaganda, the closing of Apra's headquarters, and the appointment of a notorious anti-Aprista, Isidoro Ortega, as sub-prefect led to an Aprista attempt to overrun a police station, culminating in a bloody incident.<sup>11</sup> The affair was blamed by Apra on enemies of the party camouflaged as Apristas for the purpose of evoking serious reprisals from the authorities against the party.<sup>12</sup> The opposition was not convinced by such disclaimers and continued in the Assembly to warn the Apristas of the possible consequences. Ominous editorials began to appear in El Comercio condemning Apra for its continuous pursuit of disorder and confrontation and warning that unless the government were to be accused of weakness it might be forced to take positive actions against subversive activities.<sup>13</sup>

The first of the positive actions suggested by El Comercio was unveiled on December 31, 1931, when the executive sent to Congress an Emergency Law and asked for its immediate approval. Though it was obviously aimed at the Apristas, the Minister of the Interior attempted to minimize the undemocratic nature of the legislation by pointing out that many other countries, including Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Spain,

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<sup>10</sup> El Comercio, December 18, 1931, p. 2.; New York Times, December 24, 1931, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., La Tribuna, December 27-31, 1931, passing; El Comercio, December 26, 1931, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Diario de los Debates, December 31, 1931, I, 516-18.

<sup>13</sup> El Comercio, December 26, 1931, p. 1.



had issued similar laws in response to continuing unrest by undermilitary forces.<sup>14</sup>

The proposed Emergency Law declared the following acts crimes against the State: 1) to incite resistance or disobedience to the laws or the legitimate measures of the authorities; 2) to instigate the army to rebel against the constituted powers or to foment indiscipline within the armed forces; 3) to spread news which could discredit the country or disturb peace and public order; 4) acts of violence against persons or property for political or social motives; 5) actions or words gravely offensive to the respectability of the nation's institutions or to their representatives; 6) negligence or lack of zeal by public employees in the fulfillment of duties. Depending on the infraction, the executive could impose a fine of from 50 to 5,000 soles, jail terms, or exile. (If a guilty party could not pay his fine, he was to serve one day in jail for each ten soles fined.) The executive also could order the seizure and suspension of the means used to commit the crime (e.g., political headquarters, newspapers, etc.). The Emergency Law likewise empowered the Minister of the Interior: 1) to prohibit public meetings or demonstrations; 2) to close all establishments used by those violating the above measures; 3) to decree the confiscation of all weapons and explosives even if they had been legally obtained. The law was to be in force for the duration of the Constitutional Congress and for as long afterward as the Constitution and the Congress provided.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Diario del Congreso, December 31, 1931, I, 510-31.

<sup>15</sup>Diario del Congreso, December 31, 1931, I, 512.

In spite of the executive's desire to have the law quickly debated and passed by the Assembly, approval was retarded for several days by a struggle between the President of the Assembly, Eguiguren, and Sánchez Cerro. The first considered the legislation unconstitutional and feared that its passage would doom the effectiveness and independence of Congress. Irritated, Sánchez Cerro wrote Eguiguren on January 4th demanding that he resign. At the same time he organized proceedings in the Assembly to have him removed.<sup>16</sup> Though Eguiguren temporarily retained his office, he was conspicuously absent from Congress on January 8th when the law was placed on the agenda for that day. His place was taken by the Assembly's vice-president, Clemente Revilla, a strong supporter of the regime. The outcome was never in doubt, but the struggle proved to be more vicious than expected and the victorious vote not as comfortable as hoped.

Though the Assembly's sessions had rarely appeared dignified and emotions had been near explosion since December 8th, the introduction of the law for debate nearly produced a brawl. Charges of "murderer," "thief," coward," were exchanged indiscriminately, while in the balcony partisan crowds contributed to the melee.<sup>17</sup> Amidst the uproar the representatives unveiled their reasons for supporting or opposing the law. The Social Nacionalista from Puno, Lucio Fuentes Aragon, called the law of "life or death" importance for the preservation of the nation's institutions and the social order.<sup>18</sup> From within Sánchez Cerro's own party, Carlos Sayan Alvarez from Iquitos saw the law as

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<sup>16</sup>Eguiguren, pp. 61-62.

<sup>17</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 8, 1932, I, 644-47.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 641.

necessary to give the government a psychological weapon against those who would undermine law and order. He naïvely proposed that Congress might abolish the law if it was later found that the executive abused it.<sup>19</sup> The young Fascist sympathizer Luis A. Flores from Lima made it plain that the law was needed to fight Aprista's illegal activities. He claimed that Haysen had urged a crowd in Chiclayo to rebel, that twenty-one people had been killed in Lima by an Aprista mob and that the previous day (January 7th) a plot had been discovered of which Haysen was the leader. In his apartment had been found 50 rifles and 20,000 bullets. Flores also reminded the Assembly of La Tribuna's campaign of slander against reputable citizens, its published interview with an army colonel urging an armed revolt, and its attempts to create tensions within the police force by suggesting that it was going to be disbanded.<sup>20</sup> The Aprista representatives, for their part, simply denied all the accusations and attacked the law as a continuation of the regime's persecution drive against their party.<sup>21</sup>

Other members of the minority expressed their displeasure with the proposed legislation. Alberto Delgado, an outspoken Decentralist, saw the law as incompatible with the continued existence of the Assembly and with the ideals supposedly represented by the latter.<sup>22</sup> He stated that even if clear proof had been shown that the public order was in jeopardy, his party would nonetheless vote against the law because it considered it more beneficial for the growth of democracy that

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 658-59.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 659-66.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., passim; La Tribuna, January, 1932, passim.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 638-40.

the "government fall because of its respect for the laws than for the violence it had visited upon them."<sup>23</sup> The respected independent from Arequipa, Manuel J. Bustamante de la Fuente, recognized the danger present to law and order, but called the proposed law dictatorial, for it placed the chief executive at the margin of constitutionality by giving him judicial powers. He suggested that the expressed need for the law indicated the executive's lack of confidence in himself in spite of the electoral victory.<sup>24</sup>

The temperament and divisions of the Assembly were reflected in the press. La Opinión, the hysterical organ of Unión Revolucionaria, insulted the members of Apra and repeated the threat that Aprismo would be fought to the end.<sup>25</sup> El Comercio, the more eloquent and influential spokesman of the regime, which had been relatively instrumental in creating a climate of emergency by printing daily accounts intended to substantiate the existence of an Aprista conspiracy, declared the law necessary to legalize steps which the government had to take to protect itself and the country. It argued that, because legislation was being sought against the disorders, the government was far from dictatorial.<sup>26</sup> The dangers faced by the regime and the nation, it continued, were the same as those affecting the rest of the world. Two forces were struggling for control: one which "aspires to the violent takeover of the state in order to establish a sectarian tyranny," while the second sought to defend "the traditional social and political

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., I, pp. 663-64.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 655-56.

<sup>25</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 8, 1931, I, 644.

<sup>26</sup>El Comercio, January 2, 1932, p. 1.

organization which does not wish a class struggle, nor the destruction of capital, nor the dictatorship of a foreign-oriented group."<sup>27</sup> The newspaper, therefore, in reflecting the government's thinking presented the country as divided between two irreconcilable forces; one's loyalty had to be either with "Apra and Communism or against Communism and Apra." A failure to take the latter position, it added, would place Peru in danger of experiencing a "bloody cyclone."<sup>28</sup>

The moderate daily La Gráfica, while condemning the violence of the debate in the Assembly, made no immediate comment on the law itself, though its weekly magazine Variedades attacked it for possibly interfering with the freedom of the press.<sup>29</sup> Another moderate publication, Revisión Semanal, was more than mildly opposed to the law. It asked the president to withdraw the legislation since there was no emergency and since the unrest that existed could be met successfully with the legislation already in existence. It argued that for the government to ask an emergency law after less than a month in power was like opening up a business and immediately declaring bankruptcy. The periodical reminded Sánchez Cerro that respect for law and order should start at the top, that the law he sought was dictatorial and therefore contrary to the principles for which he and the nation had fought in the struggle against Leguía; indeed that struggle would have been in vain if the law were passed, for it would represent a continuation of the policies of the Oncenio.<sup>30</sup> Though not so vehemently as Revisión

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., January 7, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> See La Gráfica and Variedades, January, 1932, passim.

<sup>30</sup> Revisión Semanal, January 7, 1932, pp. 1-2.

Semanal, most of the rest of the Lima press also opposed the law.<sup>31</sup>

On January 9th the Assembly, with Revilla presiding, cut off debate on the Emergency Law and moved that a vote be taken. The question then arose whether the law should be viewed as an amendment to the 1920 constitution (still in force), in which case a two-thirds vote was required and passage would be unlikely, or whether it should be considered an "agreement," as the government desired, requiring only a majority for approval. Revilla arbitrarily ruled that the matter was to be treated as an agreement. Then, bypassing the expected roll-call vote supposedly because of the confusion on the floor and in the balcony of the Assembly, he counted 64 votes in favor of the law and declared it passed. The size of the opposition was not revealed, since Revilla did not even bother to count it.<sup>32</sup> It is unlikely, however, that the law would have been defeated. The government forces were in full control, as indicated by the voting on January 11th on an Aprista motion censuring the leadership of the Assembly for the way it had conducted the voting on January 9th. By a slim margin, but predictably, the motion was defeated.<sup>33</sup>

The events of January 9th in the Assembly demonstrated the government's determination to force through any law it considered essential. It also marked the opening of an active campaign by the executive to totally silence the Apristas and to move both against all competitors for power and against any others who would not conform to its aims and

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<sup>31</sup>See La Noche, Perú, El Día, El Comercio, and of course La Tribuna and Amor.

<sup>32</sup>Diario de los Hechos, January 9, 1932, I, 639-93.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., January 11, 1932, I, 698-702.

directives. The regime's increasingly hard position was further reflected in the composition of the cabinet. The first cabinet, sworn in on December 8th, had represented a return to the Civilista names of the pre-Leguía era with German Arenas, the Minister of Development and Premier, occupying the same post he had under President Pardo.<sup>34</sup> Arenas and his fellow ministers presented the Emergency Law and helped get it adopted, but they were opposed by the militant Sánchez Cerristas in the Assembly who accused them of softness in applying the law and blamed them for the continuing "Apra-inspired" unrest.<sup>35</sup> The militants finally won their campaign by forcing the Arenas cabinet to resign on the relatively unimportant issue of the budget, and they succeeded in placing some of their most vociferous members on the cabinet sworn in on January 28, 1932, and on all subsequent ones. In the new cabinet Luis Flores occupied the Ministry of the Interior, Alberto Freundt Rosell that of Foreign Relations; Carlos Sayan Alvarez, Justice and Education; Elias Lozada Benevente that of Development; and Francisco Lanatta, an eloquent spokesman for the regime, that of Finance and Commerce. Lanatta also became premier. With the exception of Freundt Rosell, the new ministers were members of the Assembly and had belonged to the Sánchez Cerristas' young militant wing. They were the ones who undertook the enforcement of the Emergency Law in its most pervasive sense. Although their tenure in office was also fairly brief, they were eventually succeeded by a cabinet headed by Luis A. Flores which took

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<sup>34</sup>La Crónica, December 9, 1931, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup>Miro Quesada, Sánchez Cerro, p. 249.; Revista Semanal, March 31, 1932, p. 1.

an even harder line.<sup>36</sup>

Soon after its approval on January 9th, the Emergency Law was used to order cancellation of a planned general strike set for January 11th which El Comercio had reported to be part of an international revolutionary attempt to subvert the governments of Peru and Chile.<sup>37</sup> The law was also promptly applied throughout the country to prevent hostile political meetings, to close down political headquarters, and to muzzle the press. In Lima, where most of the press had opposed passage of the law, La Noche and Buen Humor were at first fined 100 soles for violating an unspecified section of the law and subsequently were forced to shut down.<sup>38</sup> Revista Semanal continued to attack the dictatorial methods of the executive and its concern for "unimportant political matters" while the nation's economy worsened and hunger and poverty increased.<sup>39</sup> For these criticisms the periodical was either fined or temporarily closed, and its editors and publisher were jailed. Similar hardships befell Apura and La Tribuna, which were later shut down by the Lanatta cabinet, as well as numerous other newspapers and periodicals throughout the country. While some were able to hold out, such as La Crónica, others were forced to suspend operations permanently, as in the case of Mundial, Patria, and La Noche.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>El Comercio, January 29, 1932, p. 1. See also Diario de los Debates, La Crónica, Revista Semanal, passim.

<sup>37</sup>El Comercio, January 7, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup>Revista Semanal, January 21, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., January 28, 1932, p. 1. See also El Comercio, La Crónica, and Diario de los Debates, passim.



With the press muzzled, numerous political opponents in jail or in exile, and the fear of the Emergency Law pervading even such august bodies as the Colegios de Abogados of Lima, Trujillo, Cajamarca, and Cuzco (that of Arequipa was the only one to question openly the legality of the law),<sup>41</sup> the major voice of opposition to the regime in the nation remained the Assembly. But even that was soon to be stilled. Representatives, reassured by their legislative immunity, unhesitatingly continued their campaign against the Emergency Law despite the government's repressive measures. Several times the members of the minorities attempted to re-open debate on the law but failed, although on January 30th their motion was defeated by a narrow 59 to 58 margin.<sup>42</sup> Though all minorities participated in the criticism of the government, the Aprista bloc was the most powerful and most often led the confrontations against the forces of the regime. Such encounters rarely produced anything worthwhile, usually turning into competitive shouting matches in which each side sought to outdo the other in professing anti-Leguisro and pro-labor concern.<sup>43</sup>

The Apristas outmaneuvered their antagonists in the short run by introducing a number of pro-labor measures which, however meritorious, were systematically rejected at the time by the majority--apparently for strategic political reasons. This seeming lack of concern of the Sánchez Cerrosistas for the nation's social needs increasingly became the target of Aprista attacks. Yet such criticism naturally contributed to the Sánchez Cerrosistas' mounting frustration over their inability to

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 30, 1932, II, 1017.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., December, 1931, January-February, 1932, passim.

silence the opposition, and it also provided them with added reasons to move against the last source of that criticism.<sup>44</sup>

The opportunity to move against the Assembly was provided by the uncovering of an anti-government plot on February 15th in which a number of Aprista representatives and other dissident elements belonging to the country's political and journalistic elite were apparently implicated.<sup>45</sup> As a first step the executive withdrew parliamentary immunity from several representatives and placed others under house arrest. The President of the Assembly, Eguiguren, informed of the incident, proposed that a parliamentary commission be set up to investigate the matter and let the Assembly itself take the necessary measures against the guilty representatives.<sup>46</sup> Sánchez Cerro, however, refused, and at a political rally affirmed that the executive had the duty "of exterminating this demagogic sect"---obviously referring to Apra.<sup>47</sup> On February 17th Eguiguren called the Assembly into session to discuss the events and perhaps resolve the crisis without endangering the existence of parliamentary immunity. He had advised the black-listed representatives (about fifteen at the time) to stay away from the Assembly in order to prevent an open confrontation with the executive. But the Apristas Manuel Cox and Luis Alberto Sánchez slipped by the guards and took their usual seats. Realizing all along that escape was impossible and that exile was inevitable, they had apparently sought

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *El Comercio*, February 16, 1932, p. 3. *La Crónica*, February 25, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Eguiguren, p. 64.

<sup>47</sup> *El Comercio*, February 16, 1932, p. 1.

to gain the most propaganda value from their predicament and thus discredit the executive. After the day's session terminated, the Apristas refused to leave and installed themselves in the building to force the security police to invade it. Early the next morning, in fact, the police erupted into the building, arrested the two Apristas, together with eleven other representatives who had remained in a gesture of solidarity, and quickly marched all of them off into exile.<sup>48</sup> With the Assembly violated and parliamentary immunity set aside, the government shortly afterward played out its hand by exiling most of the remaining Aprista representatives (for a total of twenty-one) and one Decentralist.<sup>49</sup>

On February 18th, with its membership considerably reduced and with the entire cabinet ready to explain the government's actions, the Assembly met once again under the presidency of Revilla. Minister of the Interior Flores listed the numerous attempted Aprista coups since the election, and he informed the Assembly of supposed Aprista efforts to form cells within the military establishment and to foment a revolution by printing false reports of imprisonment and torture. He also told the Assembly that two days before carnival (at the beginning of February) two captured Apristas confessed to having been sent to Lima to kill the president. They had been met and hosted by Luis Reyson. After that attempt was thwarted, he said, the Apristas and some Decentralists enlisted the aid of Colonel Jiménez, who in December, 1931, had been forced into retirement, for the planned February 15th coup.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Eguiguren, p. 73.

<sup>49</sup> Diario de los Debates, February 29, 1932, II, 1610-11.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., February 18, 1932, II, 1438-41.

(Jiménez himself was ordered out of the country, although he denied all complicity in a letter written from exile to El Diario of Santiago, Chile, and reprinted in La Crónica.<sup>51</sup> But Chilean reporters learned from Peruvian exiles in Arica that Jiménez had indeed been part of the February 15th conspiracy.<sup>52</sup>)

In the February 18th debate in the Assembly the question was not whether representatives had engaged in subversive activities, as Apra's Manuel Seoane had flatly stated that with the Emergency Law in force the only course left was revolution,<sup>53</sup> but whether the law could be applied to members of the Assembly. Flores argued that the Emergency Law did not specifically exempt representatives from its provisions. Regarding the violation of the Assembly by police, he stated that the Samanez Ocampo junta had set the precedent on November 17, 1931, when it had in fact sent troops into the Congressional building, but he overlooked the fact that Congress at the time was not in session and that the elected representatives meeting there were illegally usurping the rights of the junta.<sup>54</sup> As expected, the majority of the Assembly gave its approval to the executive's actions and awarded the Lanatta cabinet a vote of confidence, although thirty-seven representatives walked out in protest and nine of these belonging to the government forces voted in opposition.<sup>55</sup> After the vote Herrera, one of the major Sánchez Cerroista leaders, moved that the Emergency Law be made

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<sup>51</sup>La Crónica, February 25, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>Diario de los Debates, February 20, 1932, II, 1517.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 1516.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 1441. See also Chapter IV.

<sup>55</sup>Diario de los Debates, February 18, 1932, II, 1522-25. La Crónica, February 26, 1932, p. 2.

inapplicable to representatives and that all privileges of immunity be returned to them.<sup>56</sup> The motion was approved, but in spite of it tension remained high, with the government forces never failing to caution the minorities that they controlled the Assembly and could do anything they wished.<sup>57</sup>

The severe and thorough application of the Emergency Law proved in some respects counter productive. In the Assembly the crisis it had caused succeeded in dividing the government forces and in uniting the opposition. Some members of the Independent faction and of the Social Nationalists party withdrew from the coalition with the Sánchez Ceristas<sup>58</sup> or openly began to question the validity of the Emergency Law.<sup>59</sup> Formerly passive representatives assumed the role of vocal opposition vacated by the Apristas. The Decentralist group, which had never before worked in harmony, united in protesting the law.<sup>60</sup> Its criticisms so angered the executive that anti-Decentralist demonstrations were organized both in the hall of Congress and outside.<sup>61</sup> The Socialists, for their part, formally moved that the Assembly be transferred to Arequipa so that it could function freely, and though the motion died in committee, it received considerable support--with other cities also being mentioned as alternatives.<sup>62</sup> In the streets, meanwhile, daily

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<sup>56</sup>Diario de los Debates, February 25, 1932, II, 1602.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., passim.

<sup>58</sup>La Crónica, February 23, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., February 24, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>60</sup>Diario de los Debates, February 22, 1932, II, 1618.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., March 1, 1932, II, 1901-02.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1932, passim.

confrontations between police and opposition demonstrators turned Lima into an armed camp and produced a number of deaths as well as many wounded.<sup>63</sup>

The government's drive to muzzle or eradicate all possible enemies affected also the armed forces and the universities. The military establishment was deprived of its fuero and a number of its men were exiled or denied promotions,<sup>64</sup> and the universities' rights and privileges were equally curtailed. On April 15, 1932, the Minister of Education, Carlos Sayan Alvarez, proposed to the Assembly that the University of San Marcos be declared in a state of reorganization and that the February 6, 1931, decree passed by Sánchez Cerro himself during the first regime, be revoked. The decree had guaranteed the students ample participation in the running of the universities.<sup>65</sup> Sayan Alvarez likewise proposed the revocation of two other decrees pertaining to curriculum changes which had been issued by the Samenz Ocampo junta, and he asked that the executive be given power to set up a commission to prepare a new University Statute.<sup>66</sup>

Such intervention in university affairs was justified by the government on several grounds. It was declared that the students had abused their right to participate in the management of the university, obliging the faculty and the administration to submit to their will. They allegedly had also used their privileges to turn the institution into a center of propaganda for revolutionary ideas endangering both

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.; La Crónica, February 28-29, 1932, passim.

<sup>64</sup> Diario de los Debates, April 9, 1932, III, 2560.

<sup>65</sup> See Chapter II.

<sup>66</sup> Diario de los Debates, April 29, 1932, IV, 340-42.

the student body itself and the "national culture," and sowing more social unrest and disruption.<sup>67</sup> To prove these charges, El Comercio pointed to the creation of a chair of Marxism at the University, to the "Bolshevik" language appearing in the Revista Universitaria, to articles in the same periodical referring to the advancement of the cause of the proletariat, and to supposed red cells organized in the University by emissaries from Russia (some of whom had already been arrested).<sup>68</sup> The Communists (meaning especially Apra) were not the only ones said to be endangering the University and the country; there were also legalists at work intent upon the overthrow of the government.<sup>69</sup>

The students of San Marcos responded that they would prevent the closing of the University at any cost, and the Consejo Universitario, praising the recent advances made by the University, also expressed determination to keep it open.<sup>70</sup> The rector, José Antonio Encinas, similarly defended the record of the University and denied that it had taken a political stand, even though some of the professors and students had expressed their ideological preferences.<sup>71</sup> Encinas and other critics of the proposed re-organization saw it as the beginning of a Civilista move to recapture control of the University, spearheaded by the same professors "censured" by the students since 1931.<sup>72</sup> Unimpressed by the widespread criticism, Sayan Alvaroa warned that the

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.; El Comercio, April 18, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup>El Comercio, April 18, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup>Diario de los Debates, May 9, 1932, IV, 542.

<sup>70</sup>La Crónica, April 17, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., April 20, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>72</sup>Revista Social, May 12, 1932, p. 2.

government had the power and the right to carry out the order. And carry it out he did, following bloody clashes between the students and the police.<sup>73</sup>

Those who blamed the government for the almost daily disorders erupting in Lima were not unanimous in placing the responsibility on Sánchez Cerro personally. As during his first regime, critics often pointed to vague machinations of the president's entourage as the source of the problem. Eguiguren, for example, in a letter to Sánchez Cerro criticizing the government's policies, blamed self-interested groups around him for the unrest: they had caused the parliamentary chaos by preventing an early alliance with the Decentralists, Socialists, and Independents for fear of losing even a small portion of their political and administrative authority, and they had inspired the government's acts of violence by exaggerating the threat to public order.<sup>74</sup> Arguing along the same line, the increasingly critical La Crónica used the occasion of Leguía's death on February 5th to administer an implied warning to Sánchez Cerro in the form of a discourse on the "perfidy" of the former dictator's advisers and supposed friends whom he had protected, rewarded, and elevated to high office only to be abandoned by them in his hour of need. It pointed out that while the ex-president died in the most inglorious surroundings, the men he had favored still enjoyed their positions in the military, the diplomatic corps, the bureaucracy, the Supreme Court and throughout the judicial system.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>La Crónica, April 20, 1932, p. 2; Revista Semanal, May 5, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>74</sup>Eguiguren, p. 79.

<sup>75</sup>La Crónica, February 7, 1932, p. 2.



Sánchez Cerro, of course, was not an unwilling party to the repressions. He had apparently refused to heed the suggestion of at least some advisers that he diminish the vigor with which he pursued his enemies, and when a friend told him, "You have to lower the gun" (Hay que bajar la pistola), he is said to have answered, "Instead of lowering one gun, I have to have two. You do not know what the Apristas are like" (En vez de bajar una pistola debo tener dos. Usted no conoce lo que son los Apristas).<sup>76</sup> For their part, the Apristas were equally adamant and persistent in their opposition to the government which they hoped to overthrow, and thus contributed to the aggravation of the political situation. Under these circumstances the government became steadily more determined to snuff out and punish any unrest whatever as quickly and severely as necessary. The least hesitation, it feared, might allow uncontrollable sympathy movements to develop.

Such fear made it difficult to find an appropriate reaction when trouble occurred. On May 7, 1932, for example, when a revolt by enlisted men broke out on three naval vessels, air force planes and submarines sent to recapture the ships nearly sank one and heavily damaged the others, and within forty-eight hours, under a hastily declared state of siege, eight rebel leaders were court-martialed and shot. The government announced that the revolt was part of a larger uprising set to break out throughout Latin America and that it was Apra-Communist inspired and directed.<sup>77</sup> Critics in the Assembly, however, argued plausibly that the rebellion had no ideological foundation

<sup>76</sup>Hiro Quosia, Sánchez Cerro, p. 246.

<sup>77</sup>El Comercio, May 8-11, 1932, p. 1.

and that it resulted from the poor quality of food the sailors were receiving.<sup>78</sup>

The execution of the eight men caused as much of an uproar in the Assembly as any other event had in the past few months. The minorities demanded the creation of a parliamentary commission to investigate numerous illegal aspects of the court-martial and execution of the sailors. They argued that the men could not legally be sentenced to death because the state of siege authorizing the death penalty was not in force until after the rebellion began; thus the law had been applied retroactively.<sup>79</sup> In addition, the court-martial was presided over by the commander of one of the three rebelling vessels, and the prosecuting attorney was the second in command of another. Since both officers had been accused by the sailors of providing the low-quality food, and they were also being investigated as to their whereabouts the night of the revolt, their participation in the trial was illegal. Finally, the court-martial had been conducted on the Island of San Lorenzo away from public scrutiny, and the execution, which according to naval regulations had to be carried out publicly and by the crew of the ship, was instead conducted privately and by the Guardia Civil.<sup>80</sup> In spite of these obvious discrepancies and the rebellious mood of the minorities, their requests for an investigation were summarily defeated.

But another serious crisis in the Assembly was precipitated when Representative Ernesto Marino, an ex-naval officer and the most vocal critic of the regime's handling of the naval revolt, was imprisoned under

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<sup>78</sup>Diario de los Debates, May 14, 1932, IV, 672-73.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1932, IV, 636-73.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1932, IV, 672-75.

the Emergency Law. His apprehension prompted Eguiguren to come out from semi-retirement, assume the Presidency of the Assembly, and lead the fight which resulted in the fall of Sánchez Cerro's third, or Flores, cabinet. Though the victory was achieved because of the support of some members of the majority, this latest success gave the minorities a new vitality. They did not win many other fights, but at least they gave some character to the Assembly and added excitement to otherwise dull legislative sessions. As for Eguiguren, however, the censure of the Flores cabinet was to be his last fight for the moment, for soon afterward he was censured by the majority for "undue intervention in political matters,"<sup>81</sup> and he then followed many other Peruvians into exile just one year after he had warmly welcomed Sánchez Cerro from exile and had given him his support.

#### Aprista plots, the Trujillo revolt, and government reaction

The one event which had contributed more than any other to inspire the government's intensified drive against all suspected enemies was a nearly successful attempt on Sánchez Cerro's life. On March 6, 1932, a nineteen-year-old Aprista, José Melgar, shot and wounded the president at a Miraflores church where the executive attended mass every Sunday.<sup>82</sup> At the court-martial a week later, Melgar was reported to have stated that by killing Sánchez Cerro he intended to give Civilismo a mortal blow and permit his party to take power.<sup>83</sup> Two other Apristas were found implicated. Juan Seosue, brother of the Aprista Manuel Seosue, had provided the gun used in the assassination attempt, and Reynaldo

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<sup>81</sup>Diario de los Debates, May 27, 1932, IV, 955-56.

<sup>82</sup>El Comercio, March 7, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., March 14, 1932, p. 1. (Affm ed.)

Bolaños (or Serafín del Mar) had shared in the knowledge of the plot.<sup>84</sup> The defense lawyers apparently were convinced of the guilt of the three men, for their efforts were directed not to disproving the case presented by the prosecution but to reversing the death sentence given to Melgar and Seoane (Bolaños received a twenty-year jail sentence). They argued that the law permitting the court-martial to note out the death penalty had been approved by the Assembly on March 7th and therefore was being enforced retroactively.<sup>85</sup>

The defense's arguments were not heeded by the court, but appeals for clemency were voiced in the Assembly by members of the minorities and in the press. A commutation of the death sentence was urged as an initial move toward re-establishing tranquillity in the nation, and the Assembly specifically gave the executive authority to do this.<sup>86</sup> But if Sánchez Cerro ever contemplated initiating a more benign policy, he was dissuaded by the uncovering of an Aprista plot in Trujillo only a few days after the court-martial.<sup>87</sup> Eventually the lives of Melgar and Seoane were spared---due mainly to international pressures. But on March 23rd the president, in his first radio address since March 6th, re-emphasized his determination to eradicate Apra and its doctrine from Peru and prepared the nation for the upcoming struggle by declaring: "Having formed my spirit in an atmosphere of struggle, to fight

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., March 15, 1932, pp. 2, 7.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., March 18, 1932, p. 1.; La Crónica, March 19, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>87</sup>El Comercio, March 21, 1932, p. 11.

for my country is the only, the supreme, aspiration of my life."<sup>88</sup>

The president's new belligerency was once again reflected in a cabinet change which made Luis A. Flores the new premier, replacing Lanatta. To be sure, Lanatta had been thorough in applying the Emergency Law and the added powers which had been granted him by a separate law the Assembly approved on March 7th. The latter measure proposed by Herrera and slated to run for thirty days (but later reinstituted as needed) had placed the nation in a state of siege, had further limited constitutional guarantees, and had placed both military and civil cases under the jurisdiction of a court-martial with trials to be carried out within forty-eight hours of the crime and the death penalty to be implemented immediately after sentencing.<sup>89</sup>

Lanatta, however, became entangled in a controversy over his handling of the nation's finances and thus was replaced, by the ever more militant anti-Aprista Flores.<sup>90</sup>

First the Lanatta and then the Flores cabinet, fully empowered by Sánchez Cerro to rule while he recovered from the wounds inflicted on March 6th, carried out a witchhunting campaign against Apristas and Communists throughout the nation. Representatives in the Assembly who were the only remaining above-ground source of anti-government information, reported that individuals were using the Emergency and the Herrera Laws to settle old scores by accusing an enemy of being a Communist or an Aprista. Landowners, it was said, used the same method to have recalcitrant campesinos arrested, and even legalists were

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, March 24, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>89</sup> *Diario de los Debates*, March 7, 1932, II, 3795-96.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, April 13, 1932, III, 2655.

reported to be settling scores with enemies who had escaped them during the Oncenio.<sup>91</sup> The number of individuals who thus suffered is not known. The Apristas later insisted that they had lost 6,000 dead and 8,000 arrested under the operation of these laws,<sup>92</sup> a figure probably exaggerated even if the casualties of the bloody incident of Trujillo (July, 1932) are included. Federico More, himself an exile victim of the regime, estimated that 500 people were exiled, more than 2,000 were imprisoned, and an unknown number was persecuted.<sup>93</sup> Those who were arrested were concentrated in the jails in Lima and in prison camps in the Madre de Dios region originally opened by the Samanez Ocampo junta due to the overcrowding in the Lima jails.<sup>94</sup> The prison camps were located in a jungle area inhabited mainly by Indians, where malaria, yellow fever and other diseases were rampant and where boss and vampire bats were a serious danger.<sup>95</sup>

The most distinguished prisoner of the regime was Haya de la Torre. He was arrested on May 6, 1932, and placed on trial ten days later. As the leader of a supposedly Communist and international party, he was found guilty of violating a constitutional article which stated: "The nation is free and independent and it cannot make a pact which would oppose its integrity and independence or which in any way would affect its sovereignty."<sup>96</sup> The criminal evidence presented by

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1932, III, 2576-79.

<sup>92</sup>Haya de la Torre, Adonde va Indoménica?, p. 274.

<sup>93</sup>More, p. 35.

<sup>94</sup>The Times (London), August 3, 1931, p. 9.

<sup>95</sup>New York Times, April 4, 1932, p. 5.

<sup>96</sup>Partido Aprista Peruano, El aislamiento silencioso (Mexico D.F.; Editorial Fron, 1954), p. 29.

the prosecution was three letters found in the archives of the raided Aprista headquarters in Lima, two written by Haya de la Torre in 1929 and one by the party's executive committee in 1930. Rather than proving the party's Communist connections, the letters showed the breach that existed between the two groups. In one letter Haya de la Torre wrote that the Communists would not triumph because they were overly intellectual and subordinated real action to useless "mental masturbations."<sup>97</sup> The charges of internationalism, though unclear, could be better proven, for Haya de la Torre had written that "Apra is a continental organization which cannot be subordinated to any merely national organization," and the party's programa máximo laid down the framework for such a continental alliance. More importantly, in one of the captured letters Haya de la Torre acknowledged that Apra would not always be free to take the actions which might seem most advantageous to the nation because of its other international obligations.<sup>98</sup> On the basis of these revelations Haya de la Torre was found guilty and was sentenced to death. The execution, however, was not carried out for international reasons which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Besides being instrumental to the prosecution of the Aprista leader, the letters strengthened the government's contention that the philosophy of violent revolution was an accepted Aprista tenet<sup>99</sup> and that the party was seeking the destruction of at least some of the

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<sup>97</sup>El Comercio, February 26, 1932, p. 14.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., February 28, 1932, p. 9.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., February 26, 28, March 1, 1932, passim. The three Aprista letters were published on those days.

nation's institutions.<sup>100</sup> The fact that the letters had been written a few years earlier and that they had referred to the overthrow of the Oncenio meant little to an administration beset by the constant threat or the actual eruption of Aprista-led or -inspired coups.

The government's claim, in fact, that Apristas were behind most if not all disorders is not seriously questioned.<sup>101</sup> That the Apristas, having been earmarked for destruction, resorted to violence is understandable. The March 6th attempt on Sánchez Cerro's life, for example, came the day after a court had first ordered the arrest of Haya de la Torre. The May 7th naval uprising---perhaps coincidentally but perhaps as a deliberate response---followed the actual arrest of the Apra leader the previous day, and the serious Trujillo uprising in July took place only weeks after a court-martial had sentenced Haya de la Torre to death.

Most of the conspiracies or attempted coups which were carried out against the government were minor local attempts lacking the popular support essential for success against the alert and determined executive. One uprising, however, that of Trujillo on July 7, 1932, assumed dangerous proportions for the government and the nation. Paradoxically, the incident, rather than weakening Sánchez Cerro, strengthened his hand, because the army, an unsure entity until then, came to share the president's opinion of Apra---that it constituted a danger to the "national institutions."

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid., March 1, 1932, pp. 10-11.

<sup>101</sup>See, for example, Villanueva's El militarismo en el Perú, More's Zepoyasía, and Romulo Morino Arana, Historia policial del Perú (Lima: Imprenta del Departamento de Prensa y Publicaciones de la Guardia Civil, n.d.).



The revolution first broke out when one thousand Apristas led by a certain Manuel Barreto (nicknamed Búfalo) attacked and seized the O'Donovan military barracks near Trujillo, the Aprista stronghold, leaving thirty-six dead and fifteen wounded. Well armed, they then marched on Trujillo, attacked the police headquarter which was also the political center of the city, forced it to surrender, arrested all the officials, and named Agustín Haya de la Torre, the brother of the Aprista leader, the new prefect.<sup>102</sup> Once in control of the city, the rebels roamed through the streets setting upon suspected government supporters, burning their houses, setting afire the newspaper La Industria owned by a relative of the president, and arresting some of the most prominent local citizens.<sup>103</sup>

The outbreak was an authentic popular revolt which, however, lacked proper leadership. This shortcoming was due apparently to a misunderstanding, for the Aprista leadership had named Jiménez the leader of the revolt and had set July 27th as the date for its outbreak. Jiménez apparently drew up the plans for the uprising, but through a mix-up the agent commissioned to take him secretly to Trujillo never made contact with Jiménez and the revolt broke out prematurely on July 7th, catching Jiménez' agents throughout the nation unprepared to lend support.<sup>104</sup> These fortuitous incidents probably saved the day for Sánchez Cerro, for during the crisis the rest of the nation remained relatively quiet and the regime's military forces could be concentrated in the north, where the revolt had spread from Trujillo

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<sup>102</sup>El Comercio, July 13, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.; New York Times, July 10, 1932, p. 14.

<sup>104</sup>Manuel Seoane, El esfuerzo libertador del Comandante Jiménez, pp. 6-7.

to the rest of the department of La Libertad and part of Cajamarca.<sup>105</sup> The uprising was not to last long. The government quickly dispatched to the crisis area an infantry regiment, four rifle and two machine gun companies, part of another infantry regiment stationed in Piura, plus several naval vessels, air force planes, and a number of companies of the Guardia Civil.<sup>106</sup> The rebel leaders, lacking the military power to stop the loyal troops and recognizing the imminent fall of Trujillo, escaped from the city, leaving it in the hands of an angry mob of supporters.<sup>107</sup> On July 10th the latter attacked the jail house and executed sixty prisoners. Besides some prominent local citizens, twenty members of the Guardia Civil and nineteen members of the army (including twelve officers and seven soldiers) were killed in an outburst marked by a series of atrocities.<sup>108</sup> Some bodies were mutilated, the corpse of a military officer was riddled with twenty bullets, the heart of another had been cut out, and one had been castrated.<sup>109</sup> The same day, when loyal troops re-occupied the city and discovered these atrocities, they abandoned all restraint and carried out reprisals that resulted in the immediate execution of the rebels as soon as they were captured.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>105</sup>El Comercio, July 9, 1932, p. 3.; Merino Arana, p. 196.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., pp. 204-06.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., pp. 214-15.; El Comercio, July 13, 1932, p. 2.; New York Times, July 17, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup>Merino Arana, pp. 214-15.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

The events of Trujillo sparked a new wave of repression throughout the country.<sup>111</sup> The Assembly, in an angry mood, expelled three of its own members on the grounds of conspiring against the State.<sup>112</sup> In addition, Sánchez Cerro met with the most important citizens of Lima and Callao and launched the Colecta Nacional, a fund to which all Peruvians were asked to contribute. The money was to be used for the purpose of purchasing more of the same weapons--especially airplanes--used in defeating the rebels of Trujillo. The president also decreed the creation of a Junta de Defensa Social composed of one representative from each ministry to carry out a coordinated fight against Aprista Communist propaganda and disorders.<sup>113</sup> Last but not least, a court-martial was held. Forty-nine of the captured rebels were condemned to death and shot, and sixty-three others were sentenced to death in absentia. One hundred and six others were given jail terms.<sup>114</sup>

Aside from the destruction and the loss of lives that it caused, the Trujillo incident represented an important landmark in Peru's political evolution. The execution of the nineteen army men made that institution the adamant and relentless opponent of Aprista presidential aspirations, thus deeply affecting the nation's political events ever since. Even today the army's displeasure with Aprista can often be measured by the attendance at the commemorative services which are held each year for those nineteen men.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., July 18, 1932, p. 9.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., August 1, 4, 1932, p. 1.

For the remainder of Sánchez Cerro's regime, only one other major uprising broke out. It was not distinguished by any serious threat it posed to the government, but rather by the fact that Jiménez led it. It broke out on March 11, 1933, in Cajamarca and was supported by an infantry regiment, local police units, and Aprista and other leftist elements. The rebels, about 350 strong, were supposed to march on Trujillo, apparently to join forces with Aprista rebels there.<sup>115</sup> Once again the hoped-for national support did not materialize. The rebels were intercepted before reaching Trujillo and 260 of them were captured, while Jiménez committed suicide.<sup>116</sup>

Free from serious internal disturbances and with the armed forces more loyal than ever, Sánchez Cerro could boast on August 22, 1932--on the occasion of the second anniversary of the revolt of Arequipa--that the nation was at peace, and he could also express optimism over Peru's ability to solve its economic problems.<sup>117</sup> That optimism, however, was to be clouded several days later by the beginning of the Leticia dispute with Colombia.

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<sup>115</sup>Ibid., March 13, 1933, p. 1.; Morino Arena, p. 237.; More, p. 59.

<sup>116</sup>El Comercio, March 14, 1933, p. 1.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., August 23, 1932, p. 3.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE LETICIA DISPUTE, 1932-1933

On September 1, 1932, about 300 armed Peruvians occupied the village of Leticia in the Amazon region. They demanded the revision of the 1922 Salomon-Lozano treaty which had granted that territory to Colombia in exchange for disputed territory on the Ecuadorian-Peruvian-Colombian border. The invasion was apparently the work of a few Peruvians whose economic interests had been damaged by the treaty. They were able to gain considerable support in Loreto for the expedition to Leticia because the presence of Colombia on the Amazon hampered the free movement of Peruvians in that region. The Colombia authorities in Leticia were accused of imposing excessive charges on Peruvian ships stopping for supplies. In addition, Loretanos resented having to pay Colombian duties in Leticia on goods going to Colombian towns on the Putumayo, and some of them who had owned considerable property in Leticia were resentful over the loss of that territory. It was these same men who organized and carried out the seizure of the area.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wood, Latin American wars, p. 179.; Martínez de la Torre, Apuntes para una interpretación Marxista de historia social del Peru, I (Lima: Empresa Editora Peruana, 1947), 391. Since the Leticia conflict has been thoroughly investigated, the author limits this chapter to a general description of the conflict emphasizing its more salient characteristics as they influenced the Sánchez Cerro regime. The main source of information on the dispute used in this chapter is Wood.

The Peruvian government quickly responded by making its innocence known and stating that the assault was the work of Apro-Communist elements seeking to embarrass Sánchez Cerro.<sup>2</sup> But the private nature of the venture was disputed by most observers, who, like U.S. Ambassador Dearing, saw it as an attempt by the government to secure support from the various sections of Peru and from the armed forces in order to "stave off the waning of its influence."<sup>3</sup> In fact, such an interpretation would seem to be the logical one if two very important questions could be resolved. First of all, why was Sánchez Cerro caught militarily unprepared?<sup>4</sup> And secondly, if popular support was one of the principal considerations, why did the government fail to carry out an extensive propaganda campaign to stir up patriotic support until late in the conflict?<sup>5</sup>

Though complicity in the creation of the incident with Colombia cannot be established, when the government of Peru learned the true nature of the seizure it was quick to express support for the aims of the participants and to provide arms for the protection of the area.<sup>6</sup> Sánchez Cerro had no other alternative. He could either side with the people of Loreto and risk war with Colombia or abandon Leticia and risk his own overthrow. The Salomon-Lozano treaty was distasteful to most

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<sup>2</sup>See El Comercio, September, 1932, and Luis Anderson, El incidente entre Colombia y el Perú (San José, Costa Rica : La Tribuna, 1933), p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Wood, p. 176.

<sup>4</sup>Dearing wrote to Washington of Peru's military unpreparedness. See Wood, p. 444.

<sup>5</sup>See El Comercio for conspicuous lack of incendiary propaganda during much of the conflict.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., September 25, 1932, p. 11.

segments of Peruvian public opinion, and the Manifesto of Arequipa had listed the treaty as one of the reasons for the needed overthrow of Leguía. Since Sánchez Cerro and his advisers believed that Colombia would probably not fight over a piece of territory to which it had no direct access and that, if it did choose to fight, it could probably not match the Peruvian armed forces,<sup>7</sup> Sánchez Cerro decided to insist upon the renegotiation of the Salomon-Lozano treaty.

President Olaya Herrera of Colombia, faced with the same options as Sánchez Cerro, had no choice but to prepare for war. He, therefore, ordered an expeditionary force to Leticia via the Amazon to retake the village, but at the same time he initiated a diplomatic campaign against Peru hoping that international opinion, and especially that of the United States, would force Sánchez Cerro to back down. This seemed a wise course for him to take, since most diplomatic and legal opinions favored Colombia.<sup>8</sup>

Amidst the widespread diplomatic condemnation to which it was subjected, the Peruvian government continued to emphasize three arguments for its refusal to observe the 1922 treaty. First was the legal contention that there also existed in international law the principle that changes in conditions might make treaties inapplicable--as Peru insisted was the case of the Salomon-Lozano treaty.<sup>9</sup> It was indicated that native Peruvians in that area had been placed under the jurisdiction of a foreign country without their consent, and that now they had decided to return under the jurisdiction of their native country.

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<sup>7</sup>Wood, pp. 203, 444.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*; See also the glow of opinions from diplomats and international lawyers, unfavorable to Peru, dutifully reprinted by the Colombian government.

<sup>9</sup>Wood, p. 186.

Colombia was organizing a military expedition to again submit those Peruvians to a state which they did not desire, and Peru could not allow its nationals to be suppressed or killed simply because they would rather be Peruvian than Colombian. The aggressor, therefore, was Colombia---not Peru.<sup>10</sup>

The second Peruvian argument was the political one. It maintained that Leguía had betrayed his country by forcing the treaty through Congress in secret sessions and by concentrating troops in Loreto to prevent demonstrations and revolts.<sup>11</sup> Leguía had apparently been convinced that through such a treaty he would end the 100-year dispute with a neighboring country, permit the peaceful exploitation of the Amazon region, enhance his prestige throughout the continent, and strengthen his international credit.<sup>12</sup> But even the co-signer of the treaty, Foreign Minister Salomon, did not consider the treaty beneficial to Peru and attempted to undermine it until he was relieved of his office.<sup>13</sup>

The final Peruvian argument was that the United States had unduly pressured Leguía to sign the treaty. Sánchez Cerro charged that the treaty had been imposed on his country by a Secretary of State (Charles Evans Hughes) seeking one more laurel. His questionable involvement, and that of subsequent administrations up to 1930 when the treaty

<sup>10</sup> Jacinto Lopez, *Jacinto y el conflicto entre Colombia y el Perú resultante del tratado secreto de 1922. La consumación de Río de Janeiro* (New York: n.p., 1933), p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Wood, p. 137.

<sup>12</sup> Basadre, IX, 4970-73.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 4066-67.; Callesano Romero Franco, *Entre dos dictaduras* (Bogotá: Editorial El Gráfico, 1924), p. 188.



finally took effect, was underscored in a dispatch from Ambassador Dearing in 1932. In it he asked why the United States had insisted that the treaty be signed when there were indications that not only Salomon was opposed to it but apparently also Leguía. Yet they were forced to sign it against their will. Colombia, on the other hand, had sought the agreement and had readily signed it.<sup>14</sup>

The Peruvian arguments, however, could not overshadow the essentially legalistic Colombian case that the treaty had been duly signed and ratified by the proper authorities. The Peruvian stand, therefore, represented a breach of an agreement, and the presence of Peruvian troops in the disputed territory, an act of aggression. The Peruvian case was further weakened by the war raging in Manchuria. Though the two cases were not similar, Japan had also been declared in violation of the same universal treaties supposedly broken by Peru. In addition, while international public opinion had not hindered the Japanese effort, a minor power such as Peru was being made to feel world condemnation more harshly, perhaps as a last effort to prove that existing international agreements were still worthy of respect.

While the contest for international diplomatic support was being won by Colombia, Peru's isolation was augmented by its rather tactless handling of foreign affairs, its harsh repression of domestic political dissenters, and unfavorable Aprista and other exile propaganda. (The Apristas opposed the conflict with Colombia.) Relations with the United States had deteriorated to the point where Sánchez Cerro stopped talking to Dearing, and the U.S. Ambassador was warning the State

<sup>14</sup>Wood, pp. 171-72.

Department that a war vessel might be needed in Peru "to protect Americans from robs."<sup>15</sup> While Peru was angered by U.S. support for the Colombian position, the State Department strongly resented assertions from Lima that support was given to compensate Colombia for the loss of Panama, and objected to Sánchez Cerro's threat of forcing foreign companies to contribute to a war fund.<sup>16</sup> Similar tense relations existed with Argentina and Bolivia because some segments of the Congress and the press in those countries had criticized Sánchez Cerro's internal policies.<sup>17</sup> In addition, diplomatic relations had been broken with Mexico following the expulsion of the ambassador from Lima for having met accidentally with Haya de la Torre.<sup>18</sup>

As a result of Peruvian internal affairs, to Sánchez Cerro's image of recklessness was added that of brutality. Dispatches by foreign diplomats and the numerous Aprista articles which proliferated throughout America and Europe continuously underlined that image, and the Trujillo incident had corroborated it. But it was the arrest, trial, and conviction of Haya de la Torre which gave Sánchez Cerro the most widespread bad publicity. Following the trial the Aprista leader went on a hunger strike which was well publicized by his followers. In addition, rumors were circulated that Sánchez Cerro had personally beaten and wounded Haya de la Torre. Requests that the prisoner's life be spared came from Albert Einstein, Miguel Unzueta, the British Labor leader George Lansbury, the Argentinean Congress and other personalities

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<sup>15</sup>Wood, pp. 213-14, 451.

<sup>16</sup>Wood, pp. 183, 452.

<sup>17</sup>See Rayleigh Starnes, *Apr 13-14, May 5, 1932*, passim; *Diario de los Debates*, August 25, 1932, VI, 2042-43.

<sup>18</sup>*El Comercio*, May 15, 1932, p. 2.

and official bodies from America and Europe. Though initially the government had expressed amazement at the failure of these individuals and groups to recognize Apra for what it truly was and had earnestly demanded that they stay out of Peruvian affairs, it did not carry out the death penalty. But the issue of brutality continued, fomented by Aprista propaganda and Haya de La Torre's protracted hunger strike.<sup>19</sup>

Although Sánchez Cerro bowed to international pressures on the question of Haya de la Torre, he gave no indication of relenting on the issue of Leticia and continued to hold out for an agreement which would require a renegotiation of the 1922 treaty. This determination was the object of a number of dispatches by Ambassador Dearing. He wrote that Peru was determined to go to war with Colombia in order to have her way and that Sánchez Cerro thought he would win. He also reported that the Peruvian president was unwilling to make any concessions and that he would continue diplomatic maneuvers only for as long as he thought anything could be gained from them. The ambassador suggested that force might have to be used against Peru "...as there are no signs that the pressure coming from Brazil, our country, the Pope, the Permanent Commission of Conciliation, the British government, the Spanish government, the Chilean government, and the Italian government and very likely from other quarters is having any effect upon Sánchez Cerro and his advisers."<sup>20</sup> Similar pessimism over Sánchez Cerro's willingness to comply with world public opinion was shared by the British ambassador, who told Dearing that Foreign Minister Herránz (who had also become Premier in

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<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, August 15, 21, 1932, pp. 45-46; Wood, pp. 456-57.

<sup>20</sup>Wood, p. 197.

the early stages of the dispute) had told him that world opinion would have to be ignored if it meant abandoning the captors of Leticia.<sup>21</sup>

While at variance with most of the world, Sánchez Cerro turned toward Japan for closer ties. The kinship that was felt toward that country was most plainly stated in El Peru Ilustrado of March 29, 1933:

In view of the similar conflicts arising in Manchuria and in Leticia which have been treated with the same intransigence by the League of Nations and by the United States, Peru and Japan feel the need of uniting themselves and inaugurating a healthy and frank cooperation. The presence of Japan in Manchuria, like the presence of Peruvians in Leticia, does not arise from capricious motives but from a serious economic necessity...Peruvians and Japanese, let us work together for the triumph of our just aspirations.<sup>22</sup>

The relationship between the two countries had been consolidated by arms purchases which had made Japan one of Peru's major suppliers,<sup>23</sup> and by other unspecified "practical and positive" actions to which the Japanese ambassador alluded in an April 26, 1933, speech honoring Emperor Hirohito's birthday.<sup>24</sup>

The Peruvian desire for closer ties with Japan was not a wholly new concept. Since the Panama incident of 1903 some Latin Americans had viewed Japan as a possible counterweight to United States influence. This belief was expressed in Chocano's "Song of the future," and by

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 448. Before the Peruvian isolation from international public opinion became a reality, the Lima press (and especially the moderate Revista Semanal) was not laudatory of Japan and, in fact, was often xenophobic against Japanese immigrants. See next chapter for more detailed description.

<sup>23</sup>Departamento de Hacienda General de Aduanas, Anuario del comercio exterior del Perú, 1932 (Callao: n.p.b., 1932), p. xxiii.

<sup>24</sup>El Comercio, April 29, 1933; see the special supplement published that day honoring Hirohito's birthday.

Francisco García Calderón who in 1911 observed that publicists of Latin America expressed a "certain amount of confidence in the sympathies of Japan" perhaps even counting on "an alliance with the empire of the rising sun."<sup>25</sup> The entente with Japan, however, did not last long, and it contributed little to Peru's international position. With the death of Sánchez Cerro in April, 1933, President Oscar Benavides resumed an anti-Japanese policy which culminated in the June 26, 1936, law restricting Japanese immigration and business activity in Peru.<sup>26</sup>

While the diplomatic conflict raged on and Colombia's public opinion was primed for war,<sup>27</sup> Sánchez Cerro kept Peruvians relatively ignorant of developments. He was seemingly treating the conflict as a private affair, perhaps to maintain secret the international difficulties he was having and thus discourage an uprising at a time of crisis. Not only the country in general was kept in the dark but also the Assembly, whose members, especially those belonging to the minorities, depended for information on what they could get from the foreign press. After repeated protests, the government finally decided to brief the Assembly but kept those sessions secret.<sup>28</sup> When Victor Andrés Belaunde, as an independent representative from Arequipa, requested that newspapers at least be allowed to print the same information contained in available foreign publications and that the government

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<sup>25</sup>Fred Rippey, "The Japanese in Latin America," Inter-American Economic Affairs, III, No. 1 (Summer, 1949), 55-56.

<sup>26</sup>Irie Taraji, "History of Japanese migration to Peru," Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXII, No. 1 (February, 1952), p. 79.

<sup>27</sup>See Wood, passim.

<sup>28</sup>Diario de los Debates, December 23, 1932, IX, 5133-35.

issue a daily communique on the progress of the conflict, the president's supporters in the Assembly rejected the proposals. They feared that acceptance would imply criticism of the government and even suggest that Peru lacked freedom of the press.<sup>29</sup> This was, however, an unusual way of handling a conflict which had been initiated supposedly to revive the regime's sagging popularity. The secrecy, in fact, clearly affected Peru's position in the conflict. The *Colecta Nacional*, for example, gathering donations from across the nation for the purpose of buying airplanes and other materiel for the conflict, was successful in Lima but floundered in the provinces, apparently for lack of sufficient public enthusiasm.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the Assembly's representatives from the Peruvian Oriente repeatedly decried the lack of popular interest in the dispute.<sup>31</sup>

The government's imposed secrecy on the conflict was finally lifted following the first armed encounter at Tarapaca (February 15, 1933), in which the Colombians prevailed. Ambassador Deering reported after the encounter that "the internal propaganda system in Peru is now on a war basis." *El Comercio*, as the main instrument of that propaganda, created public opinion, gained support for the government's policy, and propagated the new patriotic slogan "Leticia will always be Peruvian."<sup>32</sup> Pledges of support arrived from many organizations, and individual Peruvians--including influential citizens like General Oscar

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, January 18, 1933, X, 183-86.

<sup>30</sup>*El Comercio*, September 26, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>*Diario de los Debates*, February 15, 1933, X, 609-13.

<sup>32</sup>Wood, p. 221.

Benavides and Jorge Prado--returned to Peru to assist in the conflict.<sup>33</sup> When another clash took place at Guapi, the two nations appeared to be embarking on an extended and bloody confrontation.

On April 30, 1933, however, the nature of the conflict changed drastically. On that day Sánchez Cerro was fatally wounded by the Aprista Abelardo Montosa Leiva, thus becoming the first Peruvian president to be assassinated while still exercising the powers of his office.<sup>34</sup> Hours after the incident the Assembly almost unanimously elected Oscar Benavides as the successor. He had the distinction of having been the commander of the Peruvian troops which in 1911 had defeated Colombian forces during a territorial dispute, but he was a more cautious man than Sánchez Cerro. He was also the man who in 1914, following the revolt against President Billinghurst, had united various political parties to bring back a degree of order to Peru's confused political life. At the swearing-in ceremonies, Benavides stressed that he belonged to no political party, that he was assuming the presidency free of partisan biases, and that he would endeavor to bring unity to the nation.<sup>35</sup> He did in fact display more leniency toward political opponents and granted a much greater degree of personal freedom.<sup>36</sup>

Though at first Benavides had to recognize the power of the Sánchez Cerristas by appointing a cabinet essentially similar to that of his predecessor, by June 29, 1933, he felt strong enough to make a

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<sup>33</sup> *El Comercio*, March 26, 1933, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> *El Comercio*, May 6, 1933, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Diario de los Debates*, April 30, 1933, XI, 1406-07.

<sup>36</sup> See the Lima press in general.

compromise cabinet devoid of any of the more notorious Sánchez Cerrosistas.<sup>37</sup> In addition, the new president, having secured the support of a majority of the Assembly, was able to undertake serious discussions with Colombia leading to the signing of an informal peace on May 25, 1933. He had grimly told the Assembly that Peru was unable to carry on a war with Colombia with any hope of achieving its aims. Not only was the nation militarily unprepared, but perhaps more seriously it was diplomatically isolated. He warned the representatives that "all the countries belonging to the League will shortly withdraw their diplomatic representatives from Lima as a sign of protest and that there may likewise be an embargo on arms and possibly an economic boycott."<sup>38</sup> A year after the informal agreement, a final peace treaty was signed. It recognized the validity of the 1922 settlement, and it contained Peru's regrets for the events which had taken place since September 1, 1932.<sup>39</sup>

The peace treaty with Colombia did not weaken Benavides' position, but in fact approval had flowed in from across the nation ever since the initial May 25, 1933, agreement. It appeared that the death of Sánchez Cerro had removed the only obstacle to the peaceful settlement of a dispute which does, in fact, appear to have been undertaken by Peru without premeditation or efficient planning and which had been politically and diplomatically mismanaged by the government. The nationalist character of the Sánchez Cerro regime and the president's own personality required that the conflict be pursued. Diplomatically, however, the

<sup>37</sup>La Gaceta, June 29, 1933, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup>Wood, p. 230.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 246-47.



regime's arguments were confused and weak, and politically the government undermined its own cause at home both by its delay in creating a popular war psychosis and by its continuing rejection of a policy of national conciliation. The regime also failed to take military advantage of its initial superiority, and subsequently, though increasing armament purchases from about one million soles in 1932 to about six in 1933,<sup>40</sup> it maintained most of that added power in Lima to ensure its own security.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the nation's high-ranking military officers were split on the conduct of the war. Some of them were demoralized by a conflict being fought in a land and climate impossible to dominate and by a government policy which subordinated military effectiveness to political considerations. In fact, not only was needed war material kept in and around Lima, but only loyal military officers were assigned to the combat area.<sup>42</sup> Aside from these difficulties, the regime had alienated the important economic interests of the nation, both native and foreign, by placing heavy cash demands on their resources.<sup>43</sup> The fact that Benavides was able to achieve both an informal peace with Colombia and a relaxation of tensions at home only twenty-five days after Sanchez Cerro's death, underlined the lack of support for the "hero of Arequipa's" undertakings and underscored the nation's desire for an end to violence.

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<sup>40</sup>Departamento de Estadística, *Anuario*, 1932, p. XVIII; 1933, p. XIII.

<sup>41</sup>Villanueva, pp. 69-70.

<sup>42</sup>Villanueva, p. 70.

<sup>43</sup>See Ed. González and Wood, *op. cit.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### SÁNCHEZ CERRO AND THE DEPRESSION, 1930-1933

Though the main concern of this study has been a political interpretation of the Sánchez Cerro regime, the political history of the period naturally cannot be wholly separated from a consideration of the economic conditions of the early 1930's and the government's policies toward economic matters. This has proved to be difficult because the economic literature on Peru does not give attention to the Sánchez Cerro presidency. This is quite understandable since the regime was in power for only seventeen months, and its overwhelming interest was in the political sphere. However, it is perhaps safe to say that the regime's attitudes toward economic policy are illustrative of a nationalist concern against foreign encroachments and of a belief in the fuller participation of government in the direction of the nation's economy. This chapter will attempt to show this and will also attempt to provide a brief, if limited, review of the Peruvian economic situation in the early 1930's.

On the eve of the depression the Peruvian economy rested primarily on four products--petroleum, copper, cotton, and sugar--accounting for exports of S/ 280,133,670 out of a total of S/ 334,933,920.<sup>1</sup> Having had again become an important economic factor only recently, while

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<sup>1</sup> *Diario de los Debates*, May 7, 1932, III, 499.

agriculture had been considered the basis of Peruvian economy since the Piérola administration (1895-99). Within agriculture, the products which the government considered most important because of their value as revenue-producing exports were sugar and cotton. This policy of heavy reliance on agriculture which began under Piérola had been based on the belief that only agriculture could provide the stability and wealth required by the nation. Originally it was a sound policy, since in 1895 the vast majority of Peruvians depended on the fruits of the land and the nation was beginning to recover from the results of the guano age and the War of the Pacific. However, it was implemented by governments controlled by the landowners of the coast whose wealth depended both on commerce and plantation-type agriculture and who subscribed to the belief that the wealth of a nation is measured by its balance of trade. Thus, they strongly encouraged the production of the two most exportable products--cotton and sugar--and, arguing that increased export volume would more than make up for low commercial duties, they placed only moderate export taxes on these and other products.<sup>2</sup>

Heavy reliance on the cotton and sugar trade eventually adversely affected the nation's economic health. The balance of trade figures, though favorable, proved to be an incorrect barometer of the nation's wealth. In fact, Peru was able to export so much because its people proved to be too poor to buy these same products. Thus, while sugar exports averaged about 400,000 tons per year, only 40,000 tons were needed to satisfy the home market since a large portion of the people was unable to pay its market price.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the coastal region,

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<sup>2</sup>Enilio Ravello, "Peru," *Intercultural and Geographical Studies* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1945), p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 322.

which imported wheat, milk, fruits, cheese, vegetables, butter, and even potatoes--aside from manufactured goods--was unable for a variety of reasons to trade with what should have been its natural supplier--the sierra. Consequently, trade benefits, already affecting only a small portion of Peruvians, were diminished by Peru's need to import basic food and clothing items and were almost wiped out by the wealthy capitalists' penchant for expensive foreign cars and other imported luxury goods. At the same time, nearly half of the nation's population could not afford to buy any of the imported food products and textiles.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, preoccupation with sugar and cotton further exposed the nation to the economic and social effects of monoculture and latifundism, and it caused the coastal production of rice, olive trees, and grapes to deteriorate. It was also indirectly responsible for the loss of valuable revenues from mining and for the mortgaging of a great deal of Peru's mineral wealth to foreigners. Thus, when world demand for copper, petroleum, vanadium, borax, etc., increased in the early 1900's and foreigners descended upon Peru's deposits, the government, being so preoccupied with agriculture, was caught unprepared to provide regulations for the administration of the mining riches. A simple decree from a village's justice of the peace or a ministerial resolution were often sufficient to give proprietary rights to oil fields or to vast mining areas. Eventually a large portion of the country's mineral wealth was portioned off without assuring for the nation a just amount of tax revenues.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, since mining left little real wealth in

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 323-24.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 319-20.

Peru beyond wages and salaries, its inclusion in the export figures, especially during the Onaonío, provided a misleading impression of the economic health of Peru.<sup>6</sup>

When the agricultural and raw material export crisis which had begun in 1928 became a world depression after the October, 1929, breakdown of the speculative stock exchange of Wall Street, Peru's economic weakness and its semi-colonial economic status became apparent. As world prices declined and exports fell 40% in value, government revenues quickly declined from S/ 140,937,192.23 in 1930 to S/ 96,928,269.15 in 1932.<sup>7</sup> With the treasury almost empty, with international credit severely curtailed, and with an outstanding national debt of S/ 500,000,000 requiring a yearly amortization of 34% of the budget,<sup>8</sup> the government's economic options were obviously limited. Peru's recovery depended mainly on an upturn in the world economy, and the country was certainly not in the position to bring about any improvement in that situation. In 1930 and 1931 a number of stop-gap measures were implemented by both Sánchez Cerro and the Samanes Ocampo junta but with limited success. Thus, when in December, 1931, Sánchez Cerro resumed power, few of Peru's economic indicators had improved and many had deteriorated. In the seventeen months that followed, no new approach to economic recovery was found, but at the end of that period Peru had begun to emerge from its most serious economic crisis of the twentieth century.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 319-20.; see also Carey, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup>*Boletín de los Debates*, May 7, 1932, IV, 499.; *Estadística Económica*, Lima, 1933, p. 207.

<sup>8</sup>Estadística del Ministerio de Hacienda (Lima: n.p.b., 1932), p. 695.; Max Winkler and Marshall Stewart, "Recent defaults of government loans," *Foreign Policy Review*, VII, No. 22 (January 6, 1932), p. 397.

In the December, 1931, memoria to the Assembly the Minister of Finance, espousing the tenets of fiscal orthodoxy, had stressed the need for a balanced budget as the necessary first step for national recovery.<sup>9</sup> This need was generally accepted, yet because of the political instability the nation had been operating under the 1930 document in spite of the obviously different economic climate. The first action of the Sánchez Cerro regime, therefore, had to be the creation of a budget in line with the existing economic conditions. A hurried provisional budget was finally submitted to the Assembly at the beginning of January, 1932, reducing government expenditures by S/ 44,000,000 to S/ 96,928,269.15<sup>10</sup> The reduction was drastic, for even though the 1932 budget made no provision for the payment of the foreign debt, the sol had depreciated. In addition, although the percentage of expenditures by the various ministries remained roughly the same, except for a sharp upturn in the Interior Ministry and an equally sharp downturn in the Ministry of Finance, the volume of expenditures for most ministries was severely reduced. The 1932 budget was approved by the Assembly on January 11th by a 74 to 29 vote, overriding the objections of some members of the minority. The Sánchez Cerros proved even unwilling to discuss the budget requests because they considered immediate approval a necessary vote of confidence for the government and a victory in the continuing political war with the Apristas.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the absence of a loyal opposition made

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<sup>9</sup> Ministerio de Hacienda, *Memoria*, pp. 626-27.

<sup>10</sup> *Extracto de la Sesión*, 1931-33, p. 202.

<sup>11</sup> *El Comercio*, January 12, 1932, p. 3.

this conduct an understandable by-product of the existing conditions.

TABLE 3\*

Ministry	1930	1932
Congress	S/ 2,572,146	S/ 2,700,000
Interior	20,717,123	21,464,843
Justice & Education	18,621,635	15,244,540
Finance	51,538,878	25,947,183
War	16,049,349	14,154,435
Navy	7,039,133	5,739,594
Development	15,566,084	8,105,713
Foreign Relations	3,177,505	2,498,531

\**Extracto estadístico*, 1931-33, pp. 206-07.

The provisional budget for 1932 remained untouched and the one for 1933 was basically similar except for a decrease of about S/ 1,500,000 in authorized expenditures.<sup>12</sup> Members of the minority again argued that the budget was too high in relation to future government revenues and suggested cuts in some ministerial budgets, but the government refused. The criticism proved to be correct, for both in 1932 and 1933 budget deficits were registered.<sup>13</sup>

Though the principle of a balanced budget was generally accepted, the question of money supply became a controversial issue. Kummerow, opposing inflation as a means of stimulating the economy, had stressed

<sup>12</sup>*Extracto estadístico*, 1931-33, p. 202.

<sup>13</sup>*Extracto estadístico*, 1933-34, pp. 284-93.

the need for a policy of tight currency, and the government and the banking institutions had come to share that belief.<sup>14</sup> This stand was severely criticized by provincial economic organizations which felt most affected by the lack of credit resources. The most vocal spokesman of provincial interests was the Economic Conference of the South, a unique regional effort by the chambers of commerce of Arequipa, Puno, Cuzco, Moquegua, Mollendo, and Tacna which met for the first time in Arequipa between February 22 and February 29, 1932, for the purpose of studying the region's economic crisis and offering possible remedies. It found every branch of the economy in deplorable shape and blamed mainly the official banking and currency policy. In its report the conference stated that the official policy had handcuffed the economy for the purpose of defending the currency against imaginary dangers and warned that that policy was bringing about national ruin.<sup>15</sup> According to the merchants of the south, currency regulations should benefit primarily production and commerce, while the Central Reserve Bank argued that the volume of currency and the availability of credit had to be regulated with an eye on monetary stability, for the unstable value of the sol was believed to be at the root of the country's problems. This dispute made its appearance in the daily press with El Comercio supporting the Bank and La Crónica supporting the southern position. The latter, owned by the sugar plantation owner Larco Herrera, was also the most vocal press organ fighting for an end to the

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<sup>14</sup>Carlos Combarabi Alcazar, "La depresión económica y los afanes peruanos (1931-32)," Revista Histórica, XXVII (1964).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 255.



gold standard. On the advice of the Kemmerer commission, in fact, Peru had returned to the gold standard in May, 1931, at a time when other nations were planning to, or had already, abandoned it. Mexico, for example, abandoned it in July, 1931; Colombia in December, 1931; and, most importantly, England in September, 1931.<sup>16</sup>

When Sánchez Cerro assumed office in December, 1931, his government defended the gold standard and promised its continuation. However, to the untimeliness of the 1931 monetary law were added social and political instability, further loss of foreign credit, and a general decrease in economic activity. The resulting loss of confidence in the Peruvian currency fanned rumors of its upcoming devaluation.<sup>17</sup> These rumors were valiantly fought by El Comercio which accused special interest groups of attempting to create the psychological factors which would force devaluation. The newspaper, therefore, urged the government to maintain the stability of the currency even if a much stronger article than the one already in force had to be added to the constitution. Only through such firmness could foreign capital be attracted to Peru and the nation resolve its numerous problems.<sup>18</sup> To squelch the same devaluation rumors, the Lima Chamber of Commerce and the Assembly also affirmed their strong support for measures which would guarantee the stability of the currency.<sup>19</sup> Some representatives,

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 234-37.

<sup>17</sup>Gianfranco Bardella, Setenta y cinco años de vida económica del Perú, 1889-1964 (Milano: Vanzetti e Vanoletti, 1964), pp. 163-64.

<sup>18</sup>El Comercio, January 7, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1932, p. 1.; Diario de los Debates, January 30, 1932, II, 1122-24.

to be sure, made the legitimate point that the Assembly could not really guarantee the stability of the currency because it was only the executive which had the power to do so. Sánchez Cerro, however, failed to intervene forcefully, and thus, in spite of the daily propaganda designed to instill confidence in the sol, in practice confidence continued to deteriorate. In a few months the country lost one-third of its gold reserves.<sup>20</sup> To stop this outflow the Central Reserve Bank then asked the government to end the convertibility of the currency, and it agreed to do so, thus abandoning the gold standard. This measure sped the decline of the sol, which depreciated from S/ 3.60 to the dollar on May 13, 1932, to S/ 5.05 on June 1st. However, rather than bring ruin as feared by El Comercio, the depreciation proved to be beneficial, for the economy in general began to witness a moderate recovery which, in spite of internal political instability and the Leticia question, continued until 1939.<sup>21</sup>

Sánchez Cerro's spurring of the economy through devaluation was apparently an unexpected outcome of a bad situation. Similar ineffectiveness was displayed in dealing with agriculture, mining, and commerce where, however, the government had relatively little direct influence. These three industries had been the hardest hit by the depression, and their improvement was closely dependent on a general worldwide economic upturn. Agriculture constituted the economic activity of about 80% of the Peruvians in spite of the fact that only

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<sup>20</sup>Bardella, pp. 164-65.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., passim.

1.2% of the total territory was cultivated.<sup>22</sup> Yet, aside from decrees which stopped for a year the auction sale of foreclosed rural properties,<sup>23</sup> which cut by 50% overdue taxes on farms,<sup>24</sup> and which lowered and fixed the price of guano sold nationally,<sup>25</sup> the government did little to ease the situation of the farmers. The credit that was available was distributed by the Banco Agrícola, whose effectiveness was limited by a shortage of funds and by a policy of undue caution in the granting of loans. Thus, between September, 1931, and December, 1932, the Bank lent S/ 14,345,922.99 to the following borrowers:

Cotton producers	S/ 9,997,030.10
Rice producers	S/ 2,055,061.66
Sugar producers	S/ 912,511.00
Cattlemen	S/ 1,088,485.00
Other agricultural producers	S/ 369,835.21

It is obvious that most of the aid went to large farmers on the coast, especially in the Departments of Piura, Lambayeque, Lima, and Ica.<sup>26</sup>

The Bank's lending policy was determined by a number of factors. To begin with its funds were limited, and thus it was forced to screen potential borrowers carefully. Consequently, smaller farmers were likely to be turned down on the ground that they were bad investment risks.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, the Bank felt obliged to lend assistance first to the coastal products which had traditionally provided the government

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<sup>22</sup>Romulo Ferrero, *Tierras y población en el Pisco: la ocupación de tierras cultivadas y sus consecuencias* (Lima: Banco Agrícola del Perú, 1936), pp. 4, 10.

<sup>23</sup>*Diario de los Debates*, January 5, 1933, X, 38-39.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, April 14, 1932, III, 2702, 2704.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, July 26, 1932, VI, 2540-44.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, January 11, 1933, X, 126.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

with considerable revenues. There was also the added factor that in helping coastal agriculture the Bank was providing assistance to the region most affected by the depression and employing more than 100,000 people.<sup>28</sup> The capitalist agriculture of the coast, in fact, was severely handicapped by the loss of markets and declining prices, while the farmers of the sierra were less affected by the crisis since they were less dependent on trade. Although in both regions farmers were often forced to abandon their land, in the coast the situation represented a deeper problem. There the foreclosed lands were resold at a considerably lower price, usually to land speculators and powerful landowners. Most of the buyers were foreign corporations which since 1929 had acquired more than twenty large haciendas.<sup>29</sup>

As Sánchez Cerro had promised in his platform, his government became very much interested in spurring agricultural development and diversification in order to make Peru self-sufficient. In the seventeen months that he was in power, however, few significant and lasting achievements were made in this area. Among some of the accomplishments can be mentioned his efforts to expand the cultivation of wheat and to increase the production of fruits, which each year cost S/ 700,000 to import. The production of tea was also encouraged through technical assistance and credit especially in La Convención region in the south, and viticulture was expanded.<sup>30</sup> In addition, experimental stations were created to assist farmers technologically, and in certain regions farmers were organized into producers' and consumers'

<sup>28</sup> Exhucito asistiendo, 1932-33, pp. 139-41.

<sup>29</sup> La Gaceta, January 11, 1932, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Diario de los Debates, May 7, 1932, IV, 501.

cooperatives by granting them both loans and insurance.<sup>31</sup> The implementation of such cooperatives appeared to be of special interest to the government which in official publications stressed the advantages of pooling together the resources of the small farmers. It claimed that they could thereby increase the effectiveness of their capital, expand production and trade, control the usurers who exploited them, and weather effectively the national and international economic crisis.<sup>32</sup> These cooperatives were to be created both on the coast and in the sierra, and according to one pamphlet the government had already prepared the basis for them with a legislative program intended to provide tax incentives and other economic aids. The program, however, was never introduced and nothing was further done about the project.

One of the major campaign promises made by Sánchez Cerro was the launching of numerous irrigation projects. The most imposing undertaking was in the La Joya area in the Department of Arequipa where 10,000 acres were earmarked for irrigation. The project, which was advertised as the economic catalyst needed for the recovery of the south, was begun on January 8, 1933.<sup>33</sup> Although the assassination of Sánchez Cerro doomed it at least for the moment, it is doubtful that much progress would have been made even if there had been no change in the presidency. The director of Waters and Irrigation of the Ministry of Development was constantly complaining that the funds earmarked for his office were barely sufficient to keep up the irrigation projects already in operation, to carry out technical studies, and to distribute

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<sup>31</sup>El Comercio, March 4, 1932, p. 13.

<sup>32</sup>Dirección de Agricultura y Ganadería, Propaganda agrícola y ganadera (Lima: Lit. Tip. Estanco de Tabaco, 1932-1933), passim.

<sup>33</sup>Dirección de Aguas y Irrigación, Aguas y irrigación, No. 1 (May 15, 1932), p. 41.

government lands, let alone begin new projects.<sup>34</sup> Thus, irrigation projects continued to lag so badly that between 1929 and 1943 the total acreage under cultivation increased by less than 2%.<sup>35</sup>

Although by 1933 the agricultural situation improved, it did so principally in response to an increasing world demand in cotton and sugar. It was recognized that this would be a factor determining the status of Peruvian agriculture. However, it was also realized that the government had done less than it could have. This criticism was especially prevalent among the farmers and cattlemen of the sierra and of the south and was voiced by the Economic Conference of the South. Cattle was an important commodity in a number of departments, with a nationwide annual production valued at about S/ 400,000,000. The industry accounted for exports of up to S/ 50,000,000 per year, and it employed more than 100,000 people.<sup>36</sup> It was especially important in the Departments of Junin, Huancavelica, and Puno, with the latter accounting for 23.8% of the national output and the whole southern region for 50% of the total.<sup>37</sup> Cattlemen emphasized that their enterprise was Peruvian-owned and therefore should receive the most immediate assistance from the government in the form of more credit, lower taxes, and reduced transportation costs. The government in fact already assisted in all those ways, and it argued that it could not do more because of the economic circumstances; but the cattlemen, especially

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<sup>34</sup>See, for example, Diario de los Debates, May 7, 1932, IV, 505-06.

<sup>35</sup>Pan American Union, p. 36.

<sup>36</sup>El Comercio, June 3, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>Basadre, X, 4714.

those from the south, insisted that the government had little interest in their plight and pointed to declining trade with Bolivia as an example. Both cattlemen and farmers in the south, in fact, depended on trade with Bolivia, but increasingly both groups were being cut off from that market by Argentinian products. They attributed this to their government's lack of enterprise and poor diplomacy, for while Argentina had worked out trade agreements with Bolivia and had helped its exporters by subsidizing railroad costs, Peru had failed on both counts. Not only did Peru neglect to make trade agreements but it also allowed the Peruvian Corporation seemingly unlimited control over railroad rates. As a result, the cheaper Argentinian products were displacing Peruvian cattle exports from Puno and the maize, cotton textiles, and wool from Cuzco traditionally sold in Bolivian markets.<sup>38</sup> The government alone, however, was not responsible for the cattlemen's plight, for an important reason for the Argentinian displacement of Peruvian cattle in Bolivia proved to be the poorer quality of Peruvian stock.<sup>39</sup>

Another economic area of concern for the Sánchez Cerro regime was, of course, mining. It usually provided 10% of the nation's tax revenues and in 1930 employed almost 30,000 workers.<sup>40</sup> There was relatively little the government could do to improve the industry's performance since it depended almost entirely on world demand, and the world market for minerals had declined from a fourteen-billion-dollars-per-year high in the 1925-29 period to six billions by 1931.<sup>41</sup> The latter decline

<sup>38</sup>Revista Semanal, May 19, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup>Industria Forestal, February, 1933, p. 47.

<sup>40</sup>Diario de los Debates, May 7, 1932, IV, 502-03.

<sup>41</sup>Basadre, X, 4718.

was reflected in Peru's own production and exportation of its principal mineral products--petroleum, copper, silver and gold--which fell off sharply in both volume and value.<sup>42</sup> The stock of the Cerro de Pasco Co., with an investment in Peru of between \$175,000,000 and \$225,000,000, fell in New York from a market value of \$132,000,000 to \$6,600,000,<sup>43</sup> and at the same time the number of mining employees declined from 32,321 in 1929 to a low of 13,737 in 1932.<sup>44</sup>

The government reacted to this mining crisis with its limited weapons. A law was approved allowing small miners not to pay their overdue 1930 and 1931 taxes and lowering by 75% all taxes due in the next five years on new capital invested in mining operations. The law stipulated that those mineowners who had lost their property in the previous two years for failure to pay taxes could reclaim it.<sup>45</sup> The government also became involved in the direct exploitation of gold mines to demonstrate that the enterprise could be successful and thus attract investments, and it financed technical and industrial mining studies to revive the industry.<sup>46</sup> The mining situation, however, did not begin to improve until 1933, and then the improvement was primarily in response to a rise in world demand.

The merchants engaged in foreign trade, like the coastal farmers and the miners, were severely hurt by the world depression. Their economic status, in fact, had deteriorated to the point where in many

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<sup>42</sup> Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, pp. 117, 118, 127.

<sup>43</sup> El Comercio, May 5, 1932, p. 15.

<sup>44</sup> Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, p. 134.

<sup>45</sup> Diario de los Debates, March 19, 1932, III, 2113.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., May 7, 1932, IV, 502-03.



cases they were unable to withdraw imported merchandise from the pier because they could not pay the existing import duties.<sup>47</sup> For their plight they also blamed the government, which, according to them, had attempted to regulate every aspect of commercial life. Although in the years prior to the depression they had held a favored position in the government's economic policy, they now protested that in the past twelve years industrial interests, mostly foreign, had predominated in the country and had pressured the executive and legislative branches to raise tariffs to the dangerous level of retarding commercial and agricultural growth.<sup>48</sup> They now urged the government on behalf of the economic elements "contributing most to the national treasury" to pay more attention to their needs.<sup>49</sup>

In fact, foreign trade was the second highest revenue producer for the government (after agriculture), and the latter was certainly anxious for it to return to its pre-depression level, but there was a limit to what Peru could do on its own. Thus, while the government waited for a revival in the world demand for Peruvian goods, it implemented some measures designed to help the trading community. The most important was the signing of a contract with the Frederick Snare Co. to complete works on the port of Callao which had been initiated during the Onizmo.<sup>50</sup> It also suspended for four months the public sale of goods left on the docks, during which time the proper merchants could

<sup>47</sup>La Crónica, November 25, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., November 25, 1931, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup>Report, Historia geográfica, p. 440.

redeem them at a substantially lower tax.<sup>51</sup> By 1933, indications of a revival in trade were clear. The import trade was about S/ 33,000,000 below the 1930 level, but exports were about S/ 21,000,000 higher, and though the country had maintained a favorable balance of trade throughout the crisis years, the 1933 surplus was about S/ 56,000,000 over the 1930 level (devaluation being one factor in that increase).

TABLE 4\*

	Imports	Exports	Favorable Balance
1930	S/ 140,261,247	S/ 235,935,304	S/ 95,724,057
1931	102,478,580	197,417,166	94,938,586
1932	76,038,927	178,529,111	102,440,184
1933	107,436,810	256,962,344	149,532,534

\*Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, p. 67.

In 1933 government revenues from the export of agricultural and mining products almost doubled from the 1930 level; those from imports were considerably below the 1930 figures but slightly higher than those registered in 1932.<sup>52</sup>

In agriculture, mining, and trade, therefore, the Sánchez Cerro regime displayed little initiative, and the general improvements in those areas occurred mainly as a result of improving world conditions. The regime had expressed nationalist tendencies by working for the achievement of self-sufficiency in the production of some goods, but

<sup>51</sup>El Comercio, March 18, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup>Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, pp. 285-86.

in view of the decline in trade the search for more self-sufficiency appeared to be a natural development. The same nationalist tendencies, however, took a more meaningful turn in the regime's handling of manufacturing, internal transportation, and foreign concerns.

Manufacturers in Peru constituted by 1931 an increasingly important group centered mainly in the Lima-Callao area, employing 11,000 workers, and with an investment of over \$20,000,000.<sup>53</sup> In their own publication, Industria Peruana, they complained of the slow growth of manufacturing and blamed it on the lack of scientific planning and the absence of a truly protectionist policy.<sup>54</sup> They pointed to the Peruvian importation of the most basic manufactured goods as proof of the weakness of national industry and stressed the need for tariff protection and government aid especially in the form of industrial credit. They also expressed the need for a broad program of economic development which would include doing away with monopolies, protecting national resources from unrestricted exploitation, building roads and other systems of transportation to unite the coast, the sierra, and the ~~portland~~, and finally providing tax incentives. The implementation of this program, the manufacturers insisted, would create the proper atmosphere in which both immigrants from Europe and foreign capital would be attracted to Peru, and they pointed to Argentina as an example.<sup>55</sup>

In spite of their complaints the industrial interests were those receiving the most help either directly from the government or indirectly from the world situation. The temporary curtailment of Peru's

<sup>53</sup>Rippy, pp. 150-51.

<sup>54</sup>Industria Peruana, July, 1931, p. 35.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., February, 1933, pp. 46-49.

capacity to earn foreign exchange had allowed the national manufacturers some added protection against foreign goods, as the Peruvian import trade figures clearly indicated. At the same time the government had undertaken a favorable policy toward the manufacturers. In April, 1932, for example, it decreed that a permanent exposition of Peruvian industrial goods be created at the Ministry of Development. Each manufacturer was required to provide samples of his products plus all pertinent information regarding plant, number and nationality of employees, costs, raw material used, destination of products, possibilities or obstacles for export, and suggestions for improvements in the tax structure. Such information would be collected in an annual bulletin and was intended both to indicate what the nation had and to show ways in which the government could help.<sup>56</sup> The main purpose of the exposition, however, was to propagandize national products and thereby overcome the lack of confidence buyers had in Peruvian-made goods. This problem was severe enough that for years some products made in Peru were camouflaged as being imported in order to ensure their sale and were then sold at inflated prices.<sup>57</sup> The exposition was finally opened in August, 1933, and one of the facts that it revealed was that more than 70% of all Peruvian industry was concentrated in Lima.<sup>58</sup> In addition to this national exposure the government ordered the strong enforcement of a law originally passed by Leguía requiring all goods produced, finished, or built in Peru to be labeled "Industria

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<sup>56</sup> El Comercio, April 2, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Industria Peruana, July, 1931, p. 33.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., August, 1933, pp. 245-303.

Peruana," and it decreed that only national wines be consumed at all official functions.<sup>59</sup>

The most important measure intended to assist Peruvian manufacturers, however, was the passage of the law in December, 1932, providing for the creation of an Industrial Bank. Manufacturing, like all the other segments of the economy, had been caught in a credit squeeze, and the problem was even more serious for Peru's future because unlike the others it was in the process of expanding its operations. The Bank was established with government capital to provide industrial firms with low-interest credit and was further empowered to work for the protection of national industries by being given a voice in the establishment of tariff policies.<sup>60</sup>

The Sánchez Cerro regime's handling of the problem of commercial transportation was of major importance since it affected every segment of the Peruvian economy and touched upon the nationalistic sensibilities of most Peruvians. Peru had a total of 2,885.405 kilometers of railroad, with the government controlling 931.327 km. and the British-owned Peruvian Corporation 1,954.178 km. There were also 435.330 km. of private railroad and 893.472 km. of urban and interurban transportation lines for a total of 4,214.307 km.<sup>61</sup> The Peruvian Corporation controlled seven lines--Paito-Piura, Pacasmayo-Guadalupe, Trujillo-Chibote-Tablonas, Central of Peru, Pisco-Ica, and the Southern of Peru, which had been built with Peruvian government funds--plus a number of smaller branches. These lines carried about 50% of all national

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., March-April, 1933, p. 111.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., December, 1932, pp. 260-81.

<sup>61</sup>Estadística económica, 1931-33, p. 148.

freight and most of the passenger traffic and, except for the private line of Cerro de Pasco Corp., it controlled the most important lines.<sup>62</sup> The Peruvian Corporation also controlled in perpetuity the commercial navigation of Lake Titicaca, handled a considerable amount of coastal traffic, and enjoyed such privileges as duty-free importation of up to three hundred products, free use of ports, specially reduced taxes, telegraph and telephone privileges, and ownership of the lands, waters, buildings, depots, factories, and all that by fact or right pertained to the railroads. As if this were not sufficient, the Corporation received from the government permission to charge rates on the basis of the value of foreign currency (British pounds) even though it paid wages in Peruvian soles.<sup>63</sup> This last stipulation had been justifiably asked and granted to the Corporation in the 1890 agreement by which it undertook to pay off the Peruvian debt in British sterling. By 1928 that debt had been paid but Leguía, at the signing of a new contract, had failed to modify the original provision. In fact he had increased the Corporation's power by granting it perpetual control of the lines it had held plus seven more formerly owned by the state. He had also allowed it to import tax-free all goods used in the operation of the railroads. In return, the Corporation relinquished its earlier rights to sell a total of 1,375,504 tons of guano (it had already exported illegally close to 3,000,000 tons) and to receive an 80,000 British pounds annual subsidy from the government, and it pledged a 20,000 pounds annual tax payment until 1937.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 151.; Diario de los Debates, June 13, 1932, V, 1417-18.

<sup>63</sup>Diario de los Debates, June 13, 1932, V, 1417-18.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.; Basadre, IX, 4150.

As the country's principal commercial carrier and as the owner of the only two transversal railroad lines in the nation--the Central and the Southern--connecting the coast and the sierra, the Corporation had virtual monopolistic powers.<sup>65</sup> Had the railroad contributed fully to the economic growth of Peru, as in theory it had been intended to do, this situation would have probably been overlooked. Instead the Corporation appeared to be concerned mainly with its profit level and thus contributed to the retardation of Peruvian economic development. Ayacucho's Chamber of Commerce, in a typical complaint, charged that in 1927, as various lead mines were opened in the sierra in response to world demand, contracts were signed with German firms to undertake their exploitation; but these had fallen through because even though production costs were minimal the railroad rates to Callao were higher than the Callao-Hamburg rates.<sup>66</sup>

The Peruvian Corporation's policy was rarely contingent on anything but its own short-run needs. Thus, with the worsening economic situation in the 1931-32 period, with the devaluation of the sol, and with the decline in traffic, the Peruvian raised its fares by 100% and threatened a new increase should the sol be again devalued. The new rates made the already limited internal commerce even less profitable, thereby aggravating the tendency for consumers on the coast to import United States, European, and even Australian goods rather than obtain the same products from the sierra. Thus, while the sierra could produce eggs, butter, meat, fruits, etc., these were being imported from China (butter, eggs), Argentina (butter, meat), Europe (cheeses), United

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<sup>65</sup>*Diario de los Estados*, May 7, 1932, IV, 503-04.

<sup>66</sup>*El Comercio*, June 13, 1932, p. 1.

States (butter, fruits), and Chile (fruits).<sup>67</sup> The increase in rates and the corresponding decline in trade and travel that resulted also caused the demise of some formerly thriving commercial centers such as Azángaro, Vilque, and Lampa, situated along the railroad routes.<sup>68</sup> All governments had traditionally displayed a hands-off policy toward the Corporation, and rather than attack its monopolistic power directly they had begun to devote money and energy to the construction of roads parallel to the railroad. The Corporation, of course, opposed such projects and attempted to undermine them. When, for example, the Puno to Cuzco road began to attract too much freight and too many passengers away from the railroad, the Corporation immediately applied its monopolistic muscle and raised railroad rates on the transportation of gasoline to the sierra, thus forcing a corresponding rate increase in road transportation.<sup>69</sup> Paradoxically, in instances where the Corporation could not have its own way, as with the carretera central, it nonetheless profited because, in order to compete, it lowered its rates and thus attracted more business.<sup>70</sup> That the Corporation usually followed the course it took in the case of the Puno-Cuzco road rather than the latter was a source of both wonder and anger.

To assist Peruvian economic interests in general, the Sánchez Cerro regime, aside from continuing the policy of road building, attempted to regulate some of the Corporation's operations. In March, 1932, it ordered the Northeast railroad to lower rates for the

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.; Revista Semanal, February 4, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup>Revista Semanal, February 18, 1932, p. 16.

<sup>69</sup>Revista Semanal, February 4, 1932, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup>Diario de los Debates, June 13, 1932, V, 1417-18.



transportation of cattle;<sup>71</sup> in April it reached an agreement with the directors of the La Oroya Cerro de Pasco line lowering rates on consumer goods and natural resources;<sup>72</sup> in the same month the Peruvian Corporation's directors in the south followed suit and promised to change their expensive short-haul transportation policy.<sup>73</sup> It must be stressed that these agreements rarely affected the transversal railroads, the main communication and supply lines between the coast and the sierra. However, in June important legislation was initiated by representative Victor Guevarra to curb some of the Corporation's more blatant prerogatives. The law, which was approved by the Assembly after a bitter struggle in which some representatives were accused of financial improprieties with the Corporation,<sup>74</sup> was finally approved unanimously on September 10, 1932. The original legislation forbade the Peruvian Corporation to charge rates in British pounds and ordered it to reimburse the nation for the extra tariffs which it had collected under this procedure since 1890.<sup>75</sup> Together with these provisions two addenda were approved--the first declaring the contract with the Corporation subject to revision and the second granting the government the power to fix rates on both passenger and freight transportation.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup>El Comercio, March 9, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., April 20, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>74</sup>Diario de los Debates, June 25, 1932, V, 1786.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., June 13, 1932, V, 1417-20.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1932, VII, 3467.

In pursuing a nationalist policy---even while still attempting to attract foreign capital<sup>77</sup>---the Sánchez Cerro regime continued to revise those contracts with foreign concerns which had been made prior to 1930 and especially during the Onecenio. In this it followed a course initiated by Sánchez Cerro himself during his first administration. Thus, the contract with British interests over the Brea and Pariñas oil fields signed in 1922, which to this day constitutes a source of friction between Peru and the U.S.-owned International Petroleum Co. (the last purchaser of the same oil rights), was declared null and void by the Assembly following a commission's investigation showing that the contract had not been approved by the Congress.<sup>78</sup> In addition, while in the past foreigners establishing a new industry in Peru had usually been given nationwide or regional ten-year monopoly on the production and sale of their products, in 1933 the government discontinued such concessions.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the Assembly approved an executive proposal ending a Swedish company's monopoly on the sale of matches,<sup>80</sup> and supported a notion which would have allowed the government to nationalize and monopolize the sale of insurance. Aside from their nationalism, both resolutions were meant to provide the state with a new source of revenues, but while the first was implemented the second was later abandoned.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup>El Comercio, December 10, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup>La Crónica, April 22, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>79</sup>Alber Kibbler, Latin American Industrialization (Caracas: La Financiera Venezolana, 1946), p. 37.

<sup>80</sup>Diario de los Debates, October 3, 1932, VII, 4013.

<sup>81</sup>El Comercio, April 23, 1932, p. 8.

In practice, the policy of investigating and revising foreign contracts was sometimes misdirected, for it damaged companies which were using their monopolistic powers effectively. Such was the case of the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co., which had signed contracts with Leguía both in 1921 and 1926 to reorganize the postal system and operate it and the telegraphic and radio-telegraphic systems for twenty-five years. In 1932 a commission of the Assembly charged that the company had mismanaged those public facilities, and the Assembly cancelled the contract and initiated indemnification proceedings against the company. The company's efficiency, however, was soon missed, and in 1935 the Benavides government signed another contract with the Marconi very similar to the previous one.<sup>82</sup>

While investigating past contracts, the Sánchez Cerro regime showed a great deal of caution in signing new ones. Thus, in the case of the Marcona iron ore deposits, the largest known in Peru, the government refused to make a hasty decision and held out for a propitious deal--which, however, Sánchez Cerro was not to make because of his assassination.<sup>83</sup>

The Sánchez Cerro regime's realization of the need for national economic planning was incorporated in the new constitution promulgated on April 9, 1933. In addition to provisions also contained in the 1920 document, such as that granting the state the power to maintain the stability of the currency by any means, the 1933 constitution ordered the creation of a National Economic Council to be formed by representatives of the commerce, the liberal professions, capital, and labor.

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<sup>82</sup>Diario de los Debates, August 13, 1932, VI, 2866.; Basadre, IX, 4151.

<sup>83</sup>Kibbler, p. 38.

Its purpose was both to advise the government on the increasingly complex technical, economic, financial, and social functions it had to assume, and to allow all the active elements of society to be represented during the state's decision-making process.<sup>84</sup> In addition, article 181 permitted the establishment of advisory commissions of Peruvian experts to be attached to each ministry for the purpose of advising in matters of education, agriculture, industry and commerce, mining, labor, indian affairs, etc.<sup>85</sup> Although these last two measures were disregarded by the following administrations, they underline the Sánchez Cerro regime's intent to involve the government more fully in the nation's economic affairs. A similar intention was displayed in both social and educational matters as will be demonstrated in the following chapter.

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<sup>84</sup>Paroja Paz-Soldan, p. 813.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IX

### SÁNCHEZ CERRO'S SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY, 1931-1933

The Sánchez Cerro regime's accomplishments in the social and educational area were adversely affected by three factors: the brevity of the regime; the president's nearly total dedication to the creation of a political order where Apristas and their suspected supporters had no influence; and finally the economic depression which curtailed government revenues, making difficult the channeling of resources into education and social welfare. However, while the accomplishments were few, the regime helped to speed acceptance of new principles of government responsibility in both of these areas.

Peru, which was mainly an agricultural nation, was thought by some of its nationals to be far less affected by the depression than most of the industrialized countries.<sup>1</sup> In pure economic terms such may have been the case, but on the basis of human suffering the crisis was equally grave, even if less extensive. The depression intensified the problem of poor nutrition and substandard health and living conditions that already existed throughout the nation. Cases of tuberculosis increased considerably, especially among children, and in 1931 Lima alone reported 23,879 cases--1,200 of which resulted in death.<sup>2</sup> Tuberculosis

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<sup>1</sup>See *Industria Peruana*, 1933.

<sup>2</sup>*La Gaceta*, March 29, 1932, p. 6.; *Diario de los Peruanos*, May 7, 1932, IV, 364-65.

together with malaria, small pox, and a variety of other diseases peculiar to each region were widespread and, according to the Minister of Development, becoming increasingly more serious. Yet only S/ 1,766,950 of the more than S/ 8,105,713 earmarked for the ministry of development in the 1932 budget went to the health bureau. (In 1930 the budget for the same ministry had been more than S/ 14,000,000.)<sup>3</sup>

During the seventeen months of Sánchez Cerro's rule the number of registered unemployed rose from 13,202 in 1931 to 20,619 in 1933 with about 45% being concentrated in the Lima-Calleo area.<sup>4</sup> These figures did not tell the whole story because they did not include the partially employed nor those who had failed to register. La Crónica of Lima, for example, conducted its own survey and roughly estimated that there were 20,000 unemployed in Lima and perhaps up to 40,000 throughout the nation.<sup>5</sup>

The principal government agency dealing with the needs of the unemployed was the Comisión Distribuidora de Fondos Pro-Desocupados created by the Samanez Ocampo junta in 1931 with branches in each department. Depending on the number of registered unemployed, each local branch was allocated a percentage of the total budget to be used on a variety of public works projects, usually road building. Beyond continuing the work of the Comisión, both the Assembly and Sánchez Cerro showed little concern for the unemployed. Budgetary considerations obviously prevented them from initiating any large-scale economic assistance program and, in fact, compelled them to terminate many public

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<sup>3</sup>Diario de los Debates, May 7, 1932, IV, 504-05.

<sup>4</sup>Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, p. 298.

<sup>5</sup>La Crónica, January 7, 1932, p. 3.

works already in progress. However, in its early days, the Sánchez Cerro regime failed to propose even mild social legislation. The minorities in the Assembly, on the other hand, and especially the Apristas, introduced a long list of proposals all aimed at assisting the jobless. Suggestions such as the one presented by the Aprista Manuel Seoane which would have required the government to provide the unemployed with up to 70% of their regular pay<sup>6</sup> were unrealistic, but other measures, at least worthy of consideration, were systematically rejected by the majority fearful of enhancing the prestige of any other party.

While the unemployed struggled to survive, those who had managed to retain employment were in constant danger of losing it. When a business stopped making what it considered to be an adequate profit, it either closed down or fired some of the less essential workers. At times workers' solidarity led them to suggest a wage decrease to stop the dismissal of colleagues, or a proportional rotation of work among employees, or an eight-hour work day to increase the number of jobs.<sup>7</sup> Employers, however, would frequently fire old personnel and hire new employees willing to work at much lower wages. This could be done because strikes were not permitted and because employers could bypass the law requiring them to pay an indemnity to a dismissed employee. The law was unenforceable since the employer, having more capital and better lawyers, was able to drag cases on for weeks and months and thus win all suits brought by disgruntled workers.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 7, 1932, I, 553-56.

<sup>7</sup>El Comercio, August 2, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Diario de los Debates, August 27, 1932, VII, 3156-62.

Responding to a growing number of complaints, the Assembly took up a resolution originally presented by Apristas which could have strengthened the hand of the employee by requiring the employer to pay for all legal fees if he lost the suit and at the same time to keep the employee on the payroll for as long as the suit lasted. The project would have also secured indemnification for the worker who was dismissed without just cause.<sup>9</sup> The proposal seemed acceptable in principle to the Assembly, but disagreement arose over how long a worker had to be employed before becoming eligible for indemnity. It was certainly unlikely that during the depression a man would take a job to leave it the next week by provoking the employer into an "unjust dismissal," but some members of the majority insisted that employers be protected from such an eventuality.<sup>10</sup> Unable to reach an agreement on this issue, the Assembly became hopelessly deadlocked over the legislation. The mortal blow, however, was given by the business community which mounted a relentless propaganda campaign against the Aprista proposal. The manufacturers, as those most threatened by the legislation, appealed to the Assembly to defeat the proposal or assume the responsibility for permanently endangering the national economy.<sup>11</sup> To stress their point they made public a letter from the representative of a French corporation which had contemplated the opening of a leather manufacturing company in Peru. The letter stated that because of the threatened approval of the Aprista proposal, over and above the already restrictive social legislation governing the relationship between employers and employees, the French concern had concluded that the

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>*Industria Peruana*, September-October, 1932, pp. 203-04.



Peruvian venture would prove unprofitable; in France and in its colonies, it was pointed out, the capitalists were better protected.<sup>12</sup> These arguments had a sobering effect on many members of the majority in the Assembly who, not wanting to destroy any chance for economic recovery, heeded the manufacturers' demands. As a result passage of the law was delayed until a work code was created by another administration.

Although the Sánchez Cerro regime and many members of the Assembly favored the business interests, ideologically at least it recognized the necessity of improving the social conditions of the laboring classes and of protecting their rights. Nowhere was this more evident than in the constitution promulgated in April, 1933. The development of this document, which had occupied most of the representatives' time, constituted the Assembly's most important undertaking and its greatest accomplishment. In spite of the fact that it was written during the political unrest of the 1930's, it was devoid of repressive measures, and, in fact, it was politically conspicuous in that it attempted to reconcile national, regional, and local interests. Aside from this political consideration, the document added some notable improvements to the fairly advanced social legislation contained in the 1920 constitution. Article 44, for example, prohibited all contractual stipulations which restrict the free exercise of civil, political, and social rights; article 45 established the principle of corporate profit-sharing among all employees; and article 48 made the state responsible for the alleviation of the economic hardships caused by unemployment, age, infirmity, injury, and death. Thus, the 1933 constitution, which is

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., October-November, 1932, pp. 360-61.

still in effect, became the basis for the social legislation of modern Peru.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the measures contained in the constitution, the Sánchez Cerro regime implemented some social legislation which the representative of the French firm mentioned above considered more restrictive to business than the French laws. The laws to which he specifically referred, aside from the Aprista proposal then being discussed, were those guaranteeing fifteen days consecutive yearly vacation for all workers and establishing May 1st as the day of the worker and a paid holiday, both passed earlier with Sánchez Cerro's approval.<sup>14</sup>

The Sánchez Cerro regime also appropriated funds for the construction of "popular restaurants" where inexpensive, abundant, and healthy food could be obtained. (The idea was later adopted by the Apristas who built their own restaurants.) Although these restaurants were supposed to serve all of the needy, they were most beneficial to the middle class, for in spite of the low (30 centavos) price for a meal, the poor could not afford to eat in them.<sup>15</sup> The basic problem was that the restaurants had been established as non-profit but self-supporting entities, with the government providing only the building, the furniture, and the kitchen utensils. In spite of all shortcomings the idea caught on and, after a first group began to operate in the Lima area, similar restaurants were ordered built throughout the nation.

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<sup>13</sup>Paroja Paz-Solden, p. 782.

<sup>14</sup>See Industria Peruana, October-November, 1932, pp. 360-61. See also La Gaceta, March 6, 1932, p. 2.; Diario de los Debates, April 29, 1932, IV, 336-39.

<sup>15</sup>Diario de los Debates, April 6, 1932, III, 2483-84.

Support for the restaurants, however, was not unanimous, and a review of the arguments in the Assembly demonstrates how the variety of interests and viewpoints cut across party lines. The most common arguments from those opposed to the restaurants were that government investments should be used instead to create jobs, that the restaurants would compete with private enterprise, or that "charity" should be left in the hands of private organizations. On the other hand, those in favor of the program would usually argue that it was needed to feed a hungry population, that it was a way of helping the middle class, or that it was a nationalist blow against Japanese and Chinese restaurant owners who not only served poor food but also hoarded their profits in Japan or other foreign countries.<sup>16</sup>

The anti-foreign sentiment expressed in connection with the popular restaurants was an underlying and widespread feeling shared by the Assembly, the press, and the general public. It was principally a result of the economic crisis, for it was feared that foreigners were getting a great deal out of Peru and putting very little back in return at a time when there were limited economic opportunities for Peruvians to share. The sentiment was not directed only against the large U. S. and British capitalists but also against the Japanese and Chinese who controlled much of small business and commerce in the Lima-Callao area. Demands that steps be taken against all foreigners were loud and persistent and the government responded. In March, 1932, the Assembly approved a law requiring 80% of the employees of foreign firms to be Peruvian and required that the payroll reflect that same percentage.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 2469-87.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., March 14, 1932, III, 1931-82.

In May the Assembly declared that only Peruvians by birth would be given licenses to open "third class" factories and establishments, referring to small businesses of the sort usually controlled by Asians. Moreover, naturalization of foreigners was suspended for two years.<sup>18</sup>

This anti-foreign display by the Peruvians became xenophobic when dealing with Asians and especially with Japanese. Specific legislation was passed against them (i.e., that referring to "third class" businesses), and proposals were made to tax all future immigrants from Asia.<sup>19</sup> The reasons for this fear are not difficult to explain. In a census taken of the Lima-Callao area in 1932 there were found to be 30,049 foreigners from 103 different countries. The most numerous group were the Japanese with 9,732 people, followed by the Chinese, Italians, Spaniards, Chileans, etc.<sup>20</sup> Since World War I the Japanese immigrating to Peru were no longer simple farmers but small traders, artisans, skilled workers, etc., and for the most part they were relatives or friends of established Japanese residents.<sup>21</sup> In addition, Japanese immigration to Peru was not simply a personal effort by people seeking a better life in another country but was financed by the Japanese government through the Overseas Development Corporation, which paid part or full transportation,<sup>22</sup> and by the Japanese Credit Society, which lent low-interest capital to immigrants.<sup>23</sup> Through such assistance,

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<sup>18</sup>El Comercio, May 17, 1932, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup>Revista Semanal, May 5, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>El Comercio, June 3, 1932, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup>Normano and Gerbi, pp. 74-77.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 4, 1933, X, 9-10.

plus family connections and personal drive, the Japanese entered the retail trade and small business and began to dominate them by displacing Peruvians. They came to control the bazaars where low-priced products were sold mainly to the poorer classes, and a high portion of the total number of small shops selling staple food articles; they had a virtual monopoly on hairdresser and barber shops and predominated among the small coffee and tea shops. They also represented about 25% of watch makers and repair shops, a high portion of the glass cutters and picture-frame makers, and an equally high percentage of plumbers and sanitation engineers. They were also important in subsidiary electrical and automobile trades, and finally they engaged even in the production of the national drink chicha, a fact that angered nationalists.<sup>24</sup> These were occupations traditionally controlled by Peruvians, but more and more of the latter were being displaced by the Japanese. In the case of barber shop ownership, for example, while those owned by Japanese increased from one in 1904 to 130 in 1924, those owned by others declined from 70 to 46, and this trend continued into the 1930's at a time of increasing unemployment.<sup>25</sup>

The presence of these Japanese merchants and traders was inconspicuous. They lived above the store and were not extravagant with their money but sent much of it back to Japan. Most of them desired to return to their homeland, and perhaps because of this they remained relative strangers in Peru and thus the object of resentment and fear on the part of the nationals.<sup>26</sup> In the Assembly, Representative D. Sotil

<sup>24</sup>Normano and Gerbi, pp. 89-100.

<sup>25</sup>Taraji Irie, p. 664.

<sup>26</sup>Normano and Gerbi, pp. 97-98.

asked for an investigation of the Japanese Credit Society and warned of the gradual economic vassalage being imposed upon the nation by the Japanese immigrants.<sup>27</sup> In the press the usually moderate Revista Semanal declared that "the Japanese immigrant is like a lethal insect which slowly but surely is sucking away Peru's economy" and that, if the process were allowed to continue, "it will be almost impossible to fight against the yellow parasitism which, like a death germ, infiltrates its exterminating virus in the very heart of our nationality." Finally it warned that the Peruvian flag flying over the old house of Pizarro would be replaced by that of the "Empire of the Rising Sun" unless drastic action were taken by the government.<sup>28</sup> The Sánchez Cerro regime, however, aside from implementing the measures mentioned above, refused to take the urgent measures suggested in the Assembly and in the press, since it depended on Japan's support in the Leticia dispute. It was not until 1936 that the government issued severe restrictions limiting Japanese immigration to Peru.

Outside the turmoil of Lima and Callao there were constant reports of social unrest in the sierra. The reasons were the same ones which had turned that area into a powder keg since the colonial period. Hacendados were continuing their age-long efforts at usurping the remaining Indian lands and at preserving their ancient domination over Indian lives. The Assembly received complaints from several regions telling of gamonales who despoiled Indians of their lands and who burned down the schools which the Indians themselves had built;<sup>29</sup> of Indians

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<sup>27</sup>Diario de los Debates, January 4, 1933, X, 9-10.

<sup>28</sup>Revista Semanal, May 5, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup>Diario de los Debates, March 10, 1933, X, 842.

being forced to sell their goods at artificially depressed prices to the local landowner; of children being required to provide free services to the hacendados, who, often having too many child servants, would rent them to other individuals;<sup>30</sup> and of local civil, military, and church authorities ignoring Indian complaints and uniting with the hacendado. This situation led to numerous armed conflicts in which a number of the participants were killed or wounded.<sup>31</sup> But while most of the Assembly members and also the executive expressed their sympathy for the plight of the Indian, they failed to go beyond the creation of investigative commissions. They had fallen prey to their own propaganda that all lawlessness and disorders were Aprista- or Communist-inspired. Consequently, when the hacendados charged that the disorders were being caused by those two enemies of the State, the national authorities either failed to curb the landowners or actively entered into the struggle on their behalf.

The only clear demonstration of government concern for the welfare of the Indian was contained in the 1933 constitution where a whole section is devoted to the Indian communities, thus expanding the regulations already contained in the 1920 constitution. After renewing recognition of the communities as legal entities, it guarantees the integrity of the communities' property, declares them inalienable, and makes them independent of the Municipal Councils, notorious for their mismanagement of Indian property (articles 207-10). Article 211 makes the state responsible for procuring sufficient land for those communities whose population had outgrown their resources, even if

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 839-42.

<sup>31</sup>For example, Ibid., p. 842.

expropriation of private property was required. Finally, article 212, perhaps the most important, recognizes the Indians' special needs by stating that the state was to pass exclusive civil, penal, economic, and administrative legislation to fit the "peculiar" needs and conditions of the Indian.<sup>32</sup>

As in the case of social legislation, most of the educational measures attributable to the Sánchez Cerro regime are contained in the 1933 constitution. In fact, in its seventeen months in power only about one hundred primary schools were built to keep pace with an increase of about 30,000 children newly enrolled in the elementary schools, and the total money spent in this area was lower than in 1931.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the funds appropriated for secondary education were lower than in 1931, thus permitting the construction of only four colegios and the hiring of no additional teachers in spite of a 3,000 student increase in enrollment.<sup>34</sup> The constitution, however, devoted a whole section to the question of education. Article 72 makes primary schools obligatory and gratuitous for all Peruvians; article 73 orders the building of a school in every population center with more than thirty students and requires every province and district capital to offer facilities for a complete primary education; article 75 guarantees secondary and superior education to all Peruvians; article 76 offers at least one vocational school in each department; and article 77 makes available technical instruction to the workers. Article 78 involves the state in the development and maintenance of pre-school and

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<sup>32</sup>Pareja Paz-Soldan, pp. 818-19.

<sup>33</sup>Extracto estadístico, 1931-33, pp. 267-277.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 286, 289.



post-school education programs and of schools for the handicapped and retarded children. And, finally, article 81 recognizes the public nature of the teaching profession and guarantees it all necessary freedoms.<sup>35</sup>

In both social and educational matters, therefore, the Sánchez Cerro regime cannot be credited with many measures of major and lasting importance. To be sure its main goal was to re-establish political tranquillity in Peru. However, even if that had not been the principal consideration, it is questionable whether the regime could have financially been able to do much more than it did. The 1933 constitution, therefore, remains the best indicator of the regime's intentions even though it is impossible to say whether its measures would have remained empty promises or would have truly become the basis for a progressive social and educational policy.

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<sup>35</sup>Paraja Paz-Soldán, pp. 792-93. See also Chapter VII for a discussion of the Sánchez Cerro regime's handling of the university question.

## CONCLUSION

Sánchez Cerro came to power during the initial stages of the most critical economic crisis of the twentieth century, and he ruled Peru at a time of great social and political upheavals. Yet, except for minor military administrative positions, there was nothing in his past which had prepared him to rule Peru. His training had been as a conspirator and military leader, but, in spite of his shortcomings, he captured the imagination of the Peruvian masses in the best romantic tradition of the nineteenth century caudillos. According to V. A. Belaunde "they [the masses] followed him because of a mysterious attraction which went beyond demagogic propaganda and their own best material interests."<sup>1</sup> In fact, in spite of Sánchez Cerro's failure in his first regime, the people overwhelmingly chose him over the Aprista candidate in the 1931 presidential election.

Although the masses constituted the numerical power behind Sánchez Cerro's movement, its financial and organizational backbone was provided by many of the Civilistas who had been dislodged from power by Leguía in 1919, by young rightist nationalists such as Luis Flores and Alfredo Herrera, and by many well-to-do Peruvians who were frightened into Sánchez Cerro's organization by the revolutionary utterances of the Apristas. With this coalition Sánchez Cerro achieved power in 1931 following an intense political rivalry which bode ill for the future of Peru.

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<sup>1</sup>Belaunde, *La crisis presente*, p. 146.

The election constituted a major defeat for the Apristas, who refused to recognize its validity charging fraud and declaring Haya de la Torre the moral president of Peru. At the same time, they undertook to undermine the new president's power further by organizing a series of unsuccessful conspiracies. Both the Apristas and the Sánchez Cerristas had threatened each other with destruction. Therefore, it is impossible to blame either side for initiating the conflict, and, although the Apristas were the first to escalate it by not recognizing the election, it is likely that a confrontation could not have been avoided. The Aprista-Sánchez Cerrista struggle further intensified when it began to be viewed by both sides as an extension of the world-wide ideological struggles of the 1930's. The Apristas were accused of being part of the international communist conspiracy intent upon the destruction of Peru's national institutions, while the Sánchez Cerristas were labeled as fascists seeking to deny the Peruvian masses their true aspirations. Both accusations were incorrect, but they served as the rationale for each group to seek the destruction of the other. Since it was the Sánchez Cerristas who won power, they were the ones to employ all the weapons available to the state in attempting to silence the opposition.

Sánchez Cerro's relentless pursuit of Apra led him on May 11, 1932, to send a memorandum to the other South American governments asking for a conference to fight the growing threat of international communism and to re-establish social order in the continent. The proposed conference would find "uniform measures of communist prevention, persecution, and repression."<sup>2</sup> The South American nations, however,

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<sup>2</sup>Hernán J. Sánchez Cerro, 1933-1953 I, *Series Vida de ayer y de hoy* (Lima: Editorial Huascarán, 1953), pp. 113-115.

were not ready to carry out such a coordinated campaign, and thus Sánchez Cerro continued his struggle alone in Peru until he was assassinated in April, 1933.

This desire to rid Peru of Apristas and to re-establish social tranquillity constituted Sánchez Cerro's main self-appointed goal. Consequently, his months in power were devoid of substantial economic, social, and educational accomplishments even though he repeatedly reaffirmed the need of government to increase its participation in economic planning and to assume a more active responsibility for the social and educational welfare of the people.

The events of the second Sánchez Cerro regime had long-lasting repercussions in Peru's political development. The most important has been the rift which the bloody incident of Trujillo in July, 1932, created between the army and Apra. For the last forty years that incident has been the basis for the strong army opposition to Apra's presidential aspirations. In addition, political rivalries which arose at that time continue today to have other important effects upon Peruvian politics, as indicated by the bitter dispute which lingers between the very influential daily El Comercio and Apra. Such feuds and the resulting strain on political peace which they produce will continue to be intense for as long as the political participants of the struggles of the 1930's live. Finally, Sánchez Cerro's intemperate measures and his inability to destroy Apra, in spite of his unswerving dedication to that goal, added an aura of both martyrdom and invincibility to the party's claim of moral righteousness and helped it win the degree of popular sympathy which, for many years, made it the most powerful political party in Peru.

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Regrettably, little work has been done on Peru's early 1930's. Politically, those years have been studied mainly in connection with the history of Apra, and thus, when not misrepresented, they are inadequately treated. In social and economic matters the lack is even more pronounced in spite of the import of the world depression: there are but few secondary sources and most do not lend themselves to a general overview of the early depression era. Consequently, the economic chapter in this study suffers both for lack of material and from the author's admitted weaknesses as an economic historian. On the social question the little information found is scattered throughout the Lima press and the Congressional records, and this topic also requires more substantial research.

The main purpose of this study is a political history of the early 1930's. It is by no means a definitive work since Sánchez Cerro's personal papers, as well as other private documents, were not available. Indeed, the political rivalries of those years are still too much alive to permit the participants or their families to make them public. In addition, few diaries or memoirs are available with the exception of José Antonio Egúsquiza's which is valuable and Rafael Lerco Herrera's which is not.

The materials found most useful were the contemporary Lima press, particularly El Comercio, la Tribuna, El Peru, and Revista Semanal; the

Diario de los Debates of the Constitutional Assembly (1931-33); the numerous Aprista writings of the 1920's and early 1930's, especially those by Haya de la Torre; the Extracto estadístico y censo electoral de la república, of immeasurable aid in the statistical analysis of the 1931 election; and the officially computed election results made available to the author by the Jurado Nacional de Elecciones. A number of secondary sources were also useful, particularly those containing a number of documents and speeches interspersed in the text. Similarly the pamphlet literature, although not very reliable, was extremely helpful in recreating the tense political atmosphere of the early 1930's.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Orazio A. Ciccarelli was born in Rome, Italy, on April 19, 1943, and there attended Giuseppe Perini Primary School and Orazio Flacco High School. In 1958 he immigrated to the United States and took residence in New York City. For two years he attended St. Francis Preparatory, and in 1960 he entered St. Francis College in Brooklyn, New York. In 1964 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in History graduating *cum laude*. In September, 1964, he matriculated at the University of Florida's History Department and in August, 1969, obtained the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of that committee. It was submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August, 1962

E. Kupferberg  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, Graduate School

Supervisory Committee:  
[Signature]  
Chairman

R. U. U. Carter

[Signature]  
M. L. Entner

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